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LETTERS,

ON THE

RESOURCES AND COMMERCE

OF

PHILADELPHIA:

FROM

JOB R. TYSON, LL.D.,

TO WILLIAM PETER,

HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S CONSUL FOR PENNSYLVANIA.

WITH MR. PETER'S ANSWER PREFIXED.

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BY a Resolution of The *Philadelphia Board of Trade*, Mr. Tyson's LETTERS ON THE RESOURCES AND COMMERCE OF PHILADELPHIA were ordered to be published in pamphlet form, for the purpose of a more general and extended circulation. That gentleman has kindly revised them for this edition.

PHILADELPHIA, January, 1852.

## LETTER FROM MR. PETER.

PHILADELPHIA, October 18th, 1851.

TO J. R. TYSON, ESQ., LL.D.

BE pleased, dear Sir, to accept my best thanks for the copies of your "LETTERS ON THE RESOURCES AND COMMERCE OF PHILADELPHIA," with which you have so kindly favoured me, and which I have read with the greatest interest and pleasure. Officially connected as I am, and have been, for so many years, with your port, and enjoying thereby the amplest opportunities of becoming acquainted with its navigation and commerce, I shall not, I trust (albeit a foreigner), be deemed guilty of presumption in briefly expressing my opinions on some of the topics to which you have called my attention.

And first, with regard to the Port of Philadelphia,—its accessibility and accommodations for ships of all sorts and sizes. I do not think that, on this head, you have said one more word in their praise than is most justly due. During the eleven years that I have had the honour of residing here as Her Majesty's Consul, nearly twelve hundred British ships have visited this port, many of them being "of the first class and the highest tonnage,"—and from not one of them did I ever hear a complaint, as to any want, either of width or depth in the Delaware, or of accommodations within its harbours. They experienced no difficulties in reaching their several wharves; no lack of conveniences for the discharge or lading of cargoes, when anchored there; no obstructions in working their way back to the ocean. It is not many months since, that in conversing with an experienced officer of one of our steamers, I asked him whether he had found either danger or difficulty in approaching the wharves of Philadelphia? "None whatever," was his instant reply. "Improvements might, indeed, be made in one or two parts of the river; but, even taking it as it is, there are very few channels so safe and easy." On asking him further, as to whether the channel was as convenient and safe for steamers as for sailing vessels, he answered, "Equally so; I know no difference

in that respect." Yet I have seen it stated, that no ship of more than five hundred tons can approach the Port of Philadelphia from the ocean!

Another topic on which you have touched in one or two of your Letters, is the location of Philadelphia for purposes of internal commerce. In this, too, I perfectly concur with you. Whether for buying or selling, whether for the receipt or distribution of all articles of traffic, no Atlantic station enjoys greater facilities or advantages than your own beautiful city of Philadelphia. To say nothing of the rich and populous marts afforded to her by her own food-growing and mineral-abounding State, she possesses—what no other Atlantic port can boast—a ready means of communication both with your great Lakes and with your Western Waters. One has but to cast a glance over the map of the United States, in order to ascertain the fact, and, at once, to see that, whilst New York communicates with the Atlantic and the Lakes, Virginia with the Atlantic and the Western Waters, Ohio with the Western Waters and the Lakes, Pennsylvania alone communicates with all three,—with the Atlantic on the south, with the Lakes on the north, and with the Western Waters on the southwest. And *why*, it may be asked, has not Pennsylvania availed herself of these advantages? *Why* has so much of her capital flitted, as you say it has, to New York; and New York herself, instead of Philadelphia, become the great wholesale dealer, the chief buyer, seller, and distributor of commercial treasure between the Old and New Worlds? Nay more—*why* has New York, in addition to all her other vast concerns, become the great importer even for Philadelphia, supplying her with goods from England, France, and China, and taking the lead, where she was once, according to all accounts, well content to follow?

Many reasons may, without doubt, be assigned for this change, and one amongst the rest, which I have sometimes heard even Philadelphians themselves acknowledge,—viz.: the superior pluck and energy of their rivals in New York. Whilst Pennsylvania has placed her chief reliance on legislation, New York has placed hers on self-exertion; whilst Pennsylvania, like the teamster in *Æsop*, of whom you speak, has been spending the better half of her time and breath in vain prayers to *Hereules*, New York has been up and doing,

bursting her swaddling-bands of protection, and manfully setting her own shoulder to the wheel. One of the evils resulting from this lack of spirit, on the part of Pennsylvania is, that she is less of a "variety store," that she has fewer articles to offer in exchange for the products of other nations, than her more energetic rival, and that numbers of foreign ships are compelled either to return home in ballast, or else to visit some other country in pursuit of cargoes. But this complaint will no doubt be soon removed by the completion of the Pennsylvania Railway, now in rapid progress to the Western Waters.

Nor are there wanting other, though minor causes, which operate, more or less, against the Commerce of Philadelphia, and by one alone of which I will venture to say, that, on the most moderate computation, more than forty vessels have been lost to the Port within the last eighteen months.\*

In conclusion, I have only, in other words, to repeat, that you have an excellent harbour, a safe channel, a fertile soil, abundance of mineral treasure, and a geographical position, equal, if not superior, to almost every other people. If, therefore, you succeed not to the extent of your wishes; if you, in any considerable degree, fall behind New York, or any other State, in the great commercial race that is to be run between you, you will have none to blame for the defeat but your own selves.

"Accuse not Nature; she hath done her part:  
Do ye but yours!"

With the most cordial good wishes for the prosperity of your State, as well as for the happiness of all who inhabit it, believe me, my dear Sir,

Most respectfully and truly yours,

WILLIAM PETER.

\* If you are desirous of knowing the cause here referred to, you may turn to the Secretary of State's Report to the Senate of the United States, of June 18th, 1850.

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LETTERS.  
ON  
THE RESOURCES AND COMMERCE  
OF PHILADELPHIA.

LETTER I.

FROM MR. TYSON TO MR. PETER.

PHILADELPHIA, July 29, 1851.

WILLIAM PETER, Esq., Her B. M. Consul for Pennsylvania.

My dear Sir:—Your official connexion with our port, has led you to take some interest in its commerce, and a residence of ten years in Philadelphia, has enabled you to form a clear notion of its wants and capacities. Among other intelligent inquirers, you have often asked, why a line, not merely of *propellers*—desirable as these are,—but of *regular steamers*, to London or Liverpool, has not been established here, as in New York and Boston. I propose to throw together such thoughts as this inquiry suggests, and to glance at the past fortunes and present prospects of the port, in the belief that both the retrospect and the anticipation justify and demand a serious effort for their introduction.

In the solicitude I may discover to build up the fair renown and true grandeur of Philadelphia, to the proportions of which she is so easily capable, you, at least, will not believe that I am influenced by a sordid or pecuniary object. I am not a merchant, and have no motive



to sensibility for the spot we inhabit, but the interest and attachment which spring from the associations of birth, the ties of kindred, and the memory of honoured ancestors for six generations. These make me alive to her honest fame and just rank in the great community of cities; they certainly render me partial, but I hope neither extravagant nor foolish, notwithstanding the sentiment—

Non simul cuiquam conceditur amare et sapere.

The extension of our commerce lies near to my heart only in connexion with its results;—with that enlargement of spirit which great opulence usually engenders, and those richer blessings of a high civilization which it secures, multiplies, and diffuses.

For nearly a century Philadelphia was regarded in Europe, not only as the great city, but the focus of refinement and civilization, in the western world. It is a mortifying truth, that though in all respects eminently entitled to her former repute, except, perhaps, in numerical precedence, she has so dwindled in English and European estimation as to be viewed only as a speck in the commercial horizon—an insignificant point on the American map. It is my purpose to show how she has thus receded from the transatlantic vision, why her foreign commerce has declined, the means of retrieving it, and how necessary its restoration is to her prosperity. I shall do this, mainly to invoke your influence with British capitalists, to aid the introduction into her port of a line of *Steam Vessels* of the largest class.

We are all aware of the cloud, which, to the eyes of many Englishmen, is still suspended over the venerable House of Pennsylvania, conjured up by the idle story of an intended *repudiation* of the public debt. To this deli-



cate topic I may, in the course of my letter, incidentally refer. Permit me, for the present, to expatiate upon the text proposed for elucidation.

I will assume then, that the ancient reputation of Pennsylvania for good faith and integrity, though deliberately fired at, was not mortally wounded, by the facetious bullets of the late reverend Canon of St. Paul's. The militant creditor was as wide of the mark in aiming at so small a sect as "the drab-coated gentry," and holding them amenable for the supposed delinquencies of the State, as he certainly missed it, in so precipitately selling his Pennsylvania Bonds under par! But to proceed to the main subject of my epistle.

Pennsylvania was the colony of mark, in the western world. Though the last settled but one of the English provinces, she soon outran them all in the race of population and the arts of life. Three-quarters of a century younger than Virginia, and sixty-two years younger than Massachusetts, she distanced, within the lapse of the former period from her settlement, all the other colonies but "the ancient dominion." Every bound of the young giant was hailed as an omen of future greatness, by the parent country. She and her sisters were ranked among the fairest flowers of the *regalia*. Her ingenious sons—her Rittenhouse, her Franklin, her West, *et Dii Minores*,—were received in London with caresses as British subjects, and conducted to such honours as learned appreciation and polite society could confer. The literature of England at that day conferred upon them celebrity, or echoed the justice of their domestic fame, until the keensighted discoveries of subsequent years, detected the orthodoxy of opposite sentiments. The same writers who had been eloquent in their praises—made less kind by political changes—could see little merit in philosophers

or artists who had ceased to be British subjects, and in a country which had ceased to belong to the British crown.

But notwithstanding the chills and damps of British criticism, Philadelphia continued to maintain her good-humoured complacency, and a healthy commercial prosperity. She was so disloyal as to supply many of the sinews of war, to sustain the new government. As the seat of the American Congress, and the chief city of the United Colonies, she was freely exposed to the perils of the conflict. But she participated in the benefits of that unrestricted commerce which the Revolution secured. Her exports, which were less than eight millions of dollars in 1790, rose in 1796 to the sum of \$17,523,866. Chiefly with Philadelphia capital, Pennsylvania made the first turnpike road, excavated the first canal, and constructed the first railway, of any magnitude, in this country. The importance of internal improvements employed the tongues and pens of her best speakers and writers, at an early day. These sentiments concurring with the influence of her example and the experience of its effects, diffused a similar spirit through New York and New England. You will not accuse me of indulging in a boastful or vain-glorious spirit, in noting what history records. It is simply the truth, that Philadelphia, in all the duties of a large community—in the construction of hydraulic works for the introduction of pure water from without her municipal limits,—in sanitary measures,—in a complete system of subterranean drainage,—worthy of imperial Rome for solidity of structure—was equally in advance of her sister cities. Her progress required and sustained these improvements. The rich trade of the West seemed destined by nature, aided by the facilities of improved roads, to centre in Philadelphia. As the metropolis of the colonies, she became the capital of the United States, under the laws

of the Federal Union. Her trade from China and South America, was large, and secured golden returns. The vessels of her merchants unfolded their canvass, in almost every sea. Colossal fortunes were amassed by an expanded, intelligent, and successful commerce. Under the genial influences of kindly wealth, heaven-blest charities were founded, and conveniences, arts, and elegancies were multiplied. It forms a portion of the letter I inflict on you, to recount the means by which these advantages were lost, and how they can be restored, with those accretions which time has accumulated.

While thus prosperous, and her commercial progress eminently onward, Philadelphia became informed of the rich mineral wealth of the interior. The vast deposits of coal and iron were so alluring in their promises, that the public mind seized upon them with avidity. The first difficulty was to subdue those wild and magnificent fortresses of nature,—those inaccessible walls of rock and mountain,—with which she delighted to guard her treasures. To penetrate their recesses, to scale their conglomerate ramparts, and convey the hidden mineral to market, over a country whose undulations of surface seemed to laugh at the effort,—was ridiculed as the dream of fanaticism or the dictate of folly. But impediments seemed only to stimulate activity, to quicken the spirit of speculation, to open the purse of enterprise. Much of the capital which had been successfully employed in foreign commerce, was thus diverted from its accustomed channel, and taught to wander to the hills, the ravines, and the rivers of the Lehigh, the Schuylkill, and the Susquehanna.

Many millions of dollars were buried in the recesses of these mountains, or in attempts to wind round their valleys, or improve the navigation of their streams. Perhaps A

HUNDRED MILLIONS,—and I do not lightly hazard this estimate,—does not exceed the sum which was transferred from the concerns of mereantile activity, and absorbed in unproductive investments, made to develop the trade, the agriculture, and above all the mineral wealth of the interior. But prodigies were achieved in various parts of the State. The Schuylkill and Susquehanna rivers were first united by a canal, and both afterwards connected by the same kind of highway with Philadelphia. That vast arm of the Atlantic, the Chesapeake Bay, was joined by canal with the Delaware, whose noble waters find a ready outlet to the sea. The Ohio River, at Pittsburg, was made to communicate, by aqueduct, with the great northern lakes, at the town of Erie. One of the great coal-fields of the State was brought to the gates of Philadelphia by a fine canal and a noble railway; and innumerable other works, of present expense and future utility, were undertaken and completed. Fifty miles at least of underground railroads, are said to exist in Schuylkill County alone. The locks of the Lehigh Canal are the deepest and finest in the world; and nothing can exceed in solidity and beauty, the inclined planes and other artificial works of that opulent region. Of the coal mines and iron mines, of the canals and railways of the State, which were undertaken in that day of blind and wanton expenditure, how few have realized the dreams or satisfied the hopes of their ardent projectors! The geology of the State had not been explored, the art of mining was imperfectly understood, and the science of engineering, so yeleft, was marked only by improvidence, by fraud, and by blunders. These gigantic efforts, like all premature and undigested schemes, were fruitful only of sad results to the undertakers. The coal trade was to be nurtured and matured by slow degrees; it is yet in its infancy, and only now beginning to



reward its owners. The iron manufacture, which was called into existence by the *protective* system, must, in order to flourish, be sustained by the stability of genial legislation. Exposed to the caprices of fluctuating sentiment, and the evils of a step-dame policy, it continues to cripple or ruin the manufacturer.

While the commercial capital was thus wasting away, and the commercial spirit absorbed by momentous projects at a distance, the Erie Canal was verging to completion. It was intended to conduct, by the way of the lakes to New York, that western trade which had been the exclusive property of Philadelphia. The object was fully attained. By this artificial highway, our natural heritage, the trade of the West, was transferred to a sagacious and vigilant rival. For a time, our shrewdest citizens were too much amused and delighted with their mountain treasures in the interior, to perceive the decline of their foreign commerce, and the adverse turn of the commercial tide in their domestic trade. The State, animated by a proper spirit towards her metropolis, determined not to submit, an unresisting victim, to an inversion of the natural laws of trade. She planned a grand scheme of internal improvements, which proposed, among its primary objects, the irrevocable appropriation to herself of the western produce and markets, and a part of the commerce of the lakes. This theory, if prosecuted with the intelligence and forecast which gave it birth, would have neutralized the effects of the Erie Canal, and intercepted the fame of Clinton, by undermining or removing the base of its monument. But owing to irretrievable mistakes in the construction of the great highway, which was made to Pittsburg, the western trade refused the conveyance,—a conveyance which was, in truth, of such a nature as to confirm it inalienably to New York.

The chain which was to bind Philadelphia with the West, was not continuous and unbroken; composed of intermingling and welded links; but severed, disjointed, fragmentary. It was an amphibious connexion of land and water, consisting of two railways separated by canal, and of two canals separated by railway,—happily elucidating the defects peculiar to both modes of transit, with the advantages of neither. This improvement being useless as a competitor of the Erie Canal, and other projects being unfinished, the public works disappointed private hope in the benefits they promised, and public hope in the unprofitable burden they imposed. The Commonwealth, oppressed by her debt, and the citizens impoverished by their losses, the western trade alienated and the foreign trade neglected and diminishing, Pennsylvania presented the reverse side of her early picture—one not pleasing to contemplate, but, I presume, less painful and humiliating in the remembrance and retrospect, than in the experience and reality.

These misfortunes were accompanied or quickly followed by others. Severe losses in the China trade ruined some of the largest ship-owners, and unwisely led to the total abandonment, at our port, of this lucrative branch of commerce. In the gloom which pervaded the commercial ranks of society, some of our most astute and enterprising merchants removed to New York, and aided by their capital and intelligence to build up that prosperity, to which the acquisition of the western trade and the foreign commerce of Philadelphia, had largely contributed. Other melancholy events succeeded. The Bank of the United States, though situated in this city, did not render such accommodations to the business community here as were favourable to the growth of the foreign, or the enlargement of the coasting trade. Still paper money was so

abundant as to foster remote enterprises, and lead to many visionary and extravagant schemes. The bankruptcy of that great institution, so long the cherished object of our pride and confidence, was as sudden as the descent of an avalanche. Other financial disasters followed it, in quick succession. These failures suddenly contracted, within the narrowest limits, a currency of unusual expansion, and threatened to involve our people in a general insolvency. Prices, which had been unnaturally inflated, became so depressed as to be merely nominal. All exchange of commodities was at an end, negotiations of sale and purchase stopped, and the payment of debts ceased. The banking capital of the city was reduced by the simple process of *annihilation*, from *fifty-one millions* to *eleven millions* of dollars! Where ruddy health, perhaps unnatural plethora, had appeared, all were paleness and dejection, wan extenuation, and prostrate syncope. If a volcano had opened its fiery jaws in our midst, or an earthquake had shaken the firmest edifices to their foundations, the popular terror could not have been more complete, the distress and dismay could not have been more painful or pervading. The multitudes over the State, who had entered into engagements in a moment of universal confidence, and upon the faith of fair but deceptive appearances, as they were unable to pay, were quickly required to make liquidation.

One of the most humiliating consequences to Pennsylvania, of that season of gloom and consternation, was the present inability of the Commonwealth to meet her obligations. She suspended the payment of interest on her debt, and issued certificates in the place of money. No private person of mature age, or responsible character, that I ever heard of, no public man of any faction, and no state paper of any description, ever counselled or hinted



at such a scheme of redress as the *sponge*, such a measure of relief as *repudiation*. The sentiment of both the great political parties in the State, at a time of deep despondency and unusual excitement, was united—without one single wrong-headed exception, among the adherents of either—in favour of a speedy resumption, and the honourable redemption of the public faith. A rigid system of economy was introduced into all the departments of administration,—by retrenchment of expenses, reduction of salaries, and discontinuance of the public works. These measures could have in view but the one object of *payment*. In order to meet the demands of the treasury and pay off the public creditor, the improvements of the State which were finished, were offered for sale to the highest bidder. But the currency was distrusted or gone. There was no representative of value, and pecuniary means were hoarded or inaccessible. No bidder could be found who had the courage or ability to make an offer. The calamities of shipwreck marked the ravages of that fearful storm. When its fury was spent, and the eye could coolly scan the track of the hurricane, nothing but blight and desolation met the view. Persons accustomed to opulence were reduced to the extremity of indigence. Our fair city, as a community, lost aggregately an immense amount of capital, varying according to the principles of different estimates, between FIFTY AND EIGHTY MILLIONS OF DOLLARS. But enough has been said to account for the diminution of Philadelphia commerce.

The next question occurs how it is to be regained,—but I will defer the consideration of this topic to another day. In the mean time, believe me to be, yours, very truly, &c.

## LETTER II.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

PHILADELPHIA, August 5, 1851.

MY DEAR SIR:—I observed in my previous letter, that Pennsylvania and her metropolis advanced more rapidly in population, arts, and wealth, than their older neighbours of New York and New England; and that this early momentum was maintained to within a quarter of a century of the present time. The State and City now stand perhaps numerically as *second* to the City and State of New York, but possessing, as they do, the means of greatness beyond the resources of their competitors, it requires no aid from the genius of prophecy to see, that Pennsylvania and Philadelphia must each stand *prima absque secundâ*, respectively pre-eminent, without a rival in this country.

In tracing the career of our City, we have seen that her business relations with Europe were arrested by the abstraction of the capital and attention necessary to its success; that it was decoyed to distant and gigantic enterprises in the interior,—to mines and furnaces, to canals and railways. I am now to inquire what effect these developments and improvements have produced, in enhancing the productive wealth of the State, and adding means to the City. You will find as I proceed, that the temporary check which was given to the tide of her prosperity, in obstructing its external current, has generously repaired the damage by opening the great fountains of the internal deep; and that within and beyond the borders of Pennsylvania, various elements are uniting their forces, which will bring back with tenfold increase, all that has been diverted or withheld, and will indefinitely swell the volume of her domestic and foreign trade. Permit me then to return

to the topic with which I closed my epistle, and consider the feasibility of restoring to Philadelphia, the foreign commerce of which she has been deprived.

The writers of New York insist that her situation on the Delaware River, at a distance of nearly one hundred miles from the Atlantic, is liable to many objections. On the other hand, all impartial persons of competent intelligence,—experienced navigators, well-informed merchants, and gentlemen conversant with nautical affairs,—agree in a different sentiment. They find in Europe the largest towns, and the most extended activity, the characteristics of ports situated on rivers, nearly as far removed from the open sea. London on the Thames, Paris on the Seine, and Liverpool on the Mersey, two of which are the largest cities of Europe, can boast of no great advantage over Philadelphia in proximity to the ocean.

But the Delaware was once traversed by a rich and busy commerce. As the length of the river did not prevent its successful prosecution, so it can interpose no barrier to its return, since modern improvements, such as the facilities of *steam* and other artificial aids to navigation, overcome the distance in a few hours. In geographical space, she is as remote from the Atlantic as when she engrossed so large a portion of American commerce; but in point of *time* she has made no inconsiderable approaches, since distance is to be measured not by miles, but by the speed of the motion employed to overcome it. The mildness of the climate, and an efficient *ice-breaker*, place her beyond the visitation of a casualty, to which the Siberian winters of Boston, render the harbour of that city peculiarly exposed. In brief, the *tug* and the *ice-boat* have removed every diversity of ingenious objection, and dissipated or neutralized every form of physical impediment.

These appliances of modern times do not lessen the

security of her marine, while they place her on the same platform with the most favoured port on the sea. Her ships while in port are effectually secured from ocean blasts, and enter on their voyages with the confidence of safety, and with all assurances of despatch.

But the kind and watchful guardians of our City in New York, ever solicitous that she should do herself no injury by rashness, raise their warning voices in a chorus of objections. They prudently hint, but in whispers, that the shoal and narrow channel of the Delaware presents insuperable obstacles to the easy admission, into our port, of the largest vessels; and that the want of room for wharves, prevents us from accommodating a large mercantile marine. Such intimations, whether by wink or innuendo, or by direct and unequivocal assertion, whether made in ignorance of facts, or from motives of wanton disparagement, are wholly unfounded and gratuitous.

The accommodations for shipping at the port of Philadelphia, are ample, and certainly more than equal to the present requisitions of the port of New York. The noble river itself is nearly a mile in width, from the Pennsylvania to the Jersey shore. A line of wharves, more than three miles long, now stretches along the eastern front of Philadelphia. The chain may be prolonged beyond Richmond on the north, to Greenwich Point, beyond the Navy Yard, on the south, making a distance of six miles, and capable of indefinite extension beyond these limits. On the bosom of this majestic highway, the largest vessel in the naval service may securely ride up to and beyond the city. At the Navy Yard on its bank, were built some of the finest specimens of naval architecture, of which our country can boast. The United States ship of the line, *Pennsylvania*, the pride and boast of the American navy, and beyond question one of the largest vessels in the world, found her



unobstructed passage to the ocean from her dock at Philadelphia. The channel of the Delaware is abundantly wide and deep, for the requisitions of commerce in peace, and the exigencies of navigation, in time of war. It appears from the official chart of the Coast Survey, that the channel is seldom less than a quarter of a mile in breadth, and varies in depth, at the most depressed stage of low water, from *four to nine and a half fathoms*, except at the bar below Fort Mifflin. At this point, which is but a few rods in extent, the deepness is eighteen feet at low water; but as the tide rises to seven feet eight inches above the plane to which the soundings are reduced, a profundity even there is attained which is equal to any emergency, and the wants of the largest craft. In the face of these facts, officially ascertained and recorded, and of the commercial history of the Delaware, one of the newspapers of New York is in the habit of informing and repeating, with emphasis,—to its willing or credulous readers,—that the stream of our magnificent Delaware, will not admit the passage of merchant ships of the first class and highest tonnage! I shall hereafter give you some account of our mercantile marine, and of the vessels which habitually sail from the port.

It thus appears that Philadelphia has convenient accommodations for a large marine, has a safe harbour, and an expansive outlet to the ocean. Nothing but the absence of *will* on the part of her merchants to appropriate these blessings,—nothing but a sluggish and censurable indifference to the rarest natural advantages,—nothing but the unmanly spirit which would tamely submit itself to a degrading and suicidal dependence on the shipping of New York,—can prevent the return, as their opposites effected the acquisition, of a remote as well as proximate, of a great as well as productive commerce. Shakspeare

with a stroke of his pen, thus indelibly engraves the decree of fate, or the deliberate award of mankind, as the result of inactivity :

“An active dwarf we do allowance give,  
Before a sleeping giant.”

But Philadelphia has not only a noble river, but the materials necessary to make it the avenue of a mighty commerce.

In order the more distinctly to show her capacity to regain what she has lost, with additions proportioned to her augmented numbers and larger capital, the eye must be fixed on her history and progress, while glancing at the elements of trade within and around her. The Genius of Philadelphia commerce should be endowed with those faculties of Past and Future, which are ascribed to the double-faced Janus of antiquity ; one to appropriate the rich and instructive lessons which a century and a half has revealed, that the other may secure that brilliant destiny, which the illuminated record unfolds. Let us see how a survey of surrounding circumstances and the register of past experience, will justify a favourable prediction in regard to her future career.

Pennsylvania possesses in her site, one element of intrinsic superiority over all her sisters. She is the only State in the Union which has a navigable outlet to the Atlantic, a footing on the Lakes, and a command of the western waters. Her controlling sceptre is admitted over the long line of the Ohio, by standing at its head, at Pittsburg. But before I trace the advantages of this position in furnishing so many inlets to the vast reservoir of her external trade, so many tributaries to the expansive sea of her foreign commerce, permit me to take a rapid view of what her own territory supplies.

The resources of the State are surpassingly rich. The anthracite coal trade which commenced by actual exportation in 1820, with 365 tons, will amount in the present year to more than 4,500,000. Since the year 1845, the vessels employed in these shipments, at Richmond, have exceeded in number and capacity the whole foreign tonnage of New York. Your town of New Castle, in England is said to enjoy from the coal business alone, a commerce second only to London itself. We may reasonably anticipate from the increasing exports of that article from year to year, and the value of the return freights, that the suburb of Richmond, now three-quarters of a mile from the northern extremity of Philadelphia, will soon mingle with and form part of the metropolis itself. So long ago as 1837, the insurable interest in the coal trade, passing round Cape May, was estimated by Major Bache, upon competent data, to exceed \$22,000,000 per annum. At that time the anthracite coal trade, concentrated on the Delaware, had not arrived at a *third* of its present magnitude. Nor do I include in the estimate of four and a half millions of tons for the anthracite trade of the current year, the western and northern shipments of bituminous coals, which, it is believed, will exceed the half of that quantity. If the supply from the mines of Pennsylvania, has risen in thirty years from 365 tons to nearly *five millions annually*, it is easy to calculate the ratio of future increase, and how soon, with the bituminous trade, it will equal that of the British dominions.

The iron manufacture of Pennsylvania, exposed as it is to perverse, and visited as it has been by adverse legislation, greatly transcends in amount of production, that of all the other States of the Union. We exceed the product of manufacture in Russia and Sweden united, and go beyond that of all Germany. We produce more iron than



France, and equal in magnitude the production of England, as her manufactures stood in the year 1820. It would be difficult to compute the value of this business to Pennsylvania, if the manufacturer of iron had not to contend with the low rates of wages paid to the English labourer, while he is obliged to pay those which are prevalent in this country. An excellent mineral and the means of working it, abound in surpassing quantities; but owing to the large capital required for the maintenance of the business, and the risks attending its pursuit, the making of iron is languishing, and its results are uncertain and precarious. The works established are not driven to half their capacity, with incredible loss to the State and deep injury to its citizens.

What has made England the richest country in Europe, but the possession of coal and iron, and the protection they received, in the early period of their history, from the ruinous effects of foreign competition? The relation which England bears to the rest of Europe, from the wealth which these minerals amass, will be sustained by Pennsylvania towards her sisters of the confederacy. Your writers go far towards assigning, as the only reason for England becoming the great capitalist of Europe, her possession of coal and iron. Professor Buckland informs us that the facilities imparted by coal to manufacture, enable less than one million of her population to perform the labour, in the production of artificial fabrics, of 400,000,000 of persons. Richard Cobden discovers in her iron and coal "the primary source of her wealth and power," and declares that the want of them alone "prevents other nations of Europe from rivalling her in manufacturing greatness." McCulloch and other writers of authority confirm this view, and express the conviction that if the British *coal* should become exhausted, her boasted manufactures, now

so dependent upon machinery, would soon become extinct. You may hence see, in the countless abundance of these minerals over Pennsylvania, one of the grand sources of her domestic wealth, and in the early and extensive developments of these elements of convenience and manufacture, and in the means of their conveyance to market, her best title to pre-eminence in commerce.

Pennsylvania contains within her borders, a larger number of factories for the making of cotton and woollen goods, than any State of the Union; nor has any member of the confederacy a deeper stake in the due encouragement of these two species of domestic industry. The census of 1850 places her highest in number on the list of these establishments, even above the large manufacturing States of Massachusetts and New York. The former has 213 cotton, and 119 woollen factories, and the latter, 86 for cotton, and 149 for wool. In Pennsylvania, there are 788 of these establishments in all, of which 208 are employed in the cotton, and 580 in the woollen manufacture. The pecuniary value of these establishments is not at present ascertainable.

No one needs be told of the agricultural capacities of Pennsylvania, of the fertility of her soil, and the excellence of her farmers. According to the same census, she is the largest wheat-producing State of the Union, her product being now greater than that of agricultural Ohio, and far exceeding in quantity that of her neighbour, the State of New York. The returns give to Pennsylvania, 15,482,191 bushels, or 2,400,000 bushels more than New York, whose arable domain is confessedly greater. Several of the States are before Pennsylvania in the article of maize, or Indian corn, but she carries the palm in the general productions of agriculture. These fruits of her fields are constantly on the increase, and, considering the broad belt of sterile mountains which divide and environ

her, and the vast area of the mineral soil, the prevailing fertility of her extended plains and valleys inspires the emotion of wonder as well as the sentiment of gratitude. This is doubtless owing chiefly to the bounty of nature, but something is due to the cultivation and thrift, the industry and intelligence of the rural population. The practical farmer of Pennsylvania, cannot find a happier or more plentiful home, than that which his own acres supply. They in turn cultivate his virtues, while they bound the circle of his wants and ambition.

“Each wish contracting fits him for the soil.”

It may now be well to compute by authentic arithmetic the aggregate amount of her various and multiplied resources. I rely for the accuracy of my figures upon estimates, prepared in the year 1844, from the official returns of the United States Census of 1840, and compiled under the eyes of John Downs and Freeman Hunt, the well-known editor of the Merchants' Magazine, a work generally received as correct in its statistical details. According to these tables, the total value of real estate in Pennsylvania is \$1,400,000,000, and of personal property \$700,000,000, making a capital of TWENTY-ONE HUNDRED MILLIONS OF DOLLARS! No estimate of the real and personal property of New York, amounted, at that period, to *one-third* of this aggregate. If we add to it the wealth which has since been accumulated, by constant development and unstinted expenditure, the sum will be so much increased, as to depress New York still lower, in comparison with Pennsylvania.

Such is the present wealth, and such the foundation of the future resources of this State. And, thanks to the prodigality of a former age, these riches are not wholly

unproductive, nor “dead weights” upon the present times. Capital is still required adequately to unfold this magazine of nature, though much has already been expended. For the development of the mineral wealth of the State, I ascertain that the expenditure amounts to *five times* the sum appropriated by Congress to all physical improvements whatever in the United States, since the year 1804,—for roads, fortifications, harbours, and rivers !

Let us then see how the public spirit and enlightened activity of her metropolis, under the depressions of an exiled commerce, a transferred and buried capital, has made these multiplied benefits her own. This view will exhibit the capabilities of the City to sustain a large foreign commerce, and present such inducements as may exist, to the collection of the funds necessary to establish at her port, a line of regular steamers.

The whole number of railways *within the State* of Pennsylvania, which exceed a mile in length, is 42, embracing together an aggregate extent of 1132 miles. Authentic data are before me, laboriously compiled by Col. Childs, which show that the cost of constructing much the greater portion of these 1132 miles of railway, amounts to the sum of \$48,236,431. If to this sum be added the cost of those which are not officially ascertained, and of those prolonged beyond our limits, but made with Pennsylvania capital, the estimate, upon reasonable presumptions, would greatly increase the line of distance, and swell the whole expenditure to above *sixty millions of dollars*. The length of the canals made within the borders of Pennsylvania, is above 1,000 miles, the construction of which may be estimated to have cost nearly *thirty millions of dollars*. The immense sums which have been employed in making tunnels and adits to coal, and subterranean and superficial structures, for



mining, and in the disinterment of iron ore, and works connected with its manufacture, would more than double the expenditure for railways and canals. No city in the Union has been so profuse as Philadelphia in the application of its capital, to develop the material wealth of the State in which she is situated; nor can any other State of the confederacy exhibit such extensive lines of artificial conveyance.

As Pennsylvania is in the van among her sisters in resources and improvements, so will be the destiny of her metropolis in magnitude and trade. *SHE, and not New York, is the GREAT DISTRIBUTER AND SELLER OF MERCHANDISE to a large portion of the western and southern country.* Not content with various railway connexions with many, the chief points of trade in her own State, she will soon hold in her iron embrace the cities of Columbus, Cincinnati, and St. Louis, by way of Pittsburg, the great western emporium of Pennsylvania. To these granaries, the various avenues of western trade converge. At no distant day she will place her cars, by way of her own great entrepôt, at Cleveland, in Ohio, and by direct communication, at the town of Erie, in her own State, on the Lake. These connexions will secure a large portion of the trade of that grand highway of waters. At Wheeling, in the State of Virginia, she will participate with Baltimore in the southern trade. These points of junction give to Philadelphia the trade of that immense region west, north, and south, whose luxuriant opulence would build into greatness and sustain the prosperity of many cities. Locally situated *between* New York and the fertile districts beyond, their trade is naturally hers, and she now is stretching out her iron arms to receive what nature so bountifully offers.

New York having no geographical connexion with the West, is limited by her natural boundary to the Lake

trade, and encounters in her ambitious endeavours to seize our western commerce, the interposing barrier of the county of Erie, in Pennsylvania. If the existing legislation of the State is to be respected, and future legislatures prove faithful to their duty, *the gate of the West* will never be opened to such an avenue as the New York and Erie railroad. This thoroughfare is constructed upon the *very narrow* principle of the *wide gauge*, for the exclusive benefit of the city of New York, and to prevent any beneficial union with the works of Pennsylvania, the width of whose railways requires different engines and cars. Confining her to Dunkirk, until Philadelphia shall have reached the port of Erie, with a railway which she is resolved to construct, the western roads of the gauge common to Ohio, will converge at the same terminus, and their cars, by a better and shorter route, will pass directly to Philadelphia;—leaving to New York only that portion of trade which is specially destined for a northern mart. Such an arrangement secures to Philadelphia the commerce concentrated at Erie, as she has already secured that of the upper lakes at Cleveland. By her connexions with Cincinnati and Wheeling, she will appropriate to herself much of that southern custom which is intended to enrich the metropolis of Maryland.

It is by means of the Pennsylvania railway to Pittsburg, prolonged westwardly to St. Louis, joining Cleveland on one side, and Wheeling and Cincinnati on the other, and stretching through Kentucky to Nashville, and ulterior points, that Philadelphia will enjoy the immense trade of the Upper Lakes, of the Ohio, of the Upper Mississippi, and of their numerous, beautiful, and teeming tributaries. The improvements of New York cannot offer a competition with Philadelphia, for the trade of that ex-

pansive region, of which these cities and towns form the natural drains, or the grand foci. Cleveland is 175 miles, and Cincinnati 249 miles nearer to Philadelphia than New York; and the remoter points of junction beyond, maintain these relative distances. The completion of the railway, now nearly finished, which is to connect these rich and wide domains to Philadelphia, will form a marked era in her history. It will be the epoch not merely of the commencement of an intimate intercourse with the West and its dependencies, but the time when other enterprises are to spring into life.

No untoward accident has ever marred the prospects of the Pennsylvania railroad, which has been blest in an excellent engineer,\* by whom it has been capitally located on the shortest line which nature permits, with light gradients, and built in the best manner, and at the least possible expense. This undertaking has been well sustained by popular appreciation, and by the liberality of public and private assistance: It will literally redeem the pledge of its original friends, *that no debt should be incurred in its prosecution*, and that the great work should be carried on and finished, by means alone of subscriptions to the capital stock. This policy, which was declared to be fundamental, has been faithfully observed; and the capital of the Company, now nearly if not fully subscribed, must prove, so unlike all previous efforts in Pennsylvania, *a paying stock*, greatly beyond the legal interest of money, and of consequence, universally in demand.

The successful completion of this enterprise will create a motive or incitement to the construction of a great railway, which shall connect Sunbury with Erie. Such a work will control the destinies of that mighty commerce,

\* John Edgar Thompson, Esq.



with which Philadelphia will be enriched by the intermediate country and the northwest, concentrated at the Lake, its northern terminus. Those disjointed links, which the continuity of the chain requires, between Harrisburg and Sunbury, will be speedily undertaken, so as to form an unbroken connexion with these interesting and fertile regions. No doubt can be entertained that Philadelphia will shake off all apathy and unconcern, and rouse herself to the magnitude of a present and impending danger. The cars of the New York and Erie railway, are now in the vicinity of the town of Erie in Pennsylvania, and menace Philadelphia with the abstraction of her trade in her own State, and at one of the most copious sources of its supply.

That selfish and exclusive policy which suggested the six feet gauge in opposition to the general gauge of the country, will, in the presence of a rival, produce the natural effect of illiberality, in cutting off a profitable union between that railway and the western roads. It indeed prevents the single evil which this short-sighted policy proposed alone to redress,—the diversion of merchandise, once in its cars, from their destination into the city of New York. By forming a barrier, as it does, to the flow of all tributaries to its own stream, the invidious design will be thwarted or countervailed, by turning these currents into the swelling channel of a railway, leading to Philadelphia. But the line from Erie to Philadelphia, being 90 miles shorter than that to New York, must determine the direction of the trade, whenever and as soon as the opportunity of a transit hither, shall be presented.

With such means of intercourse, such of trade and travel to and with the West, North, and South, no value can be set, no calculation made of their advantages, which would not be deemed vain or extravagant. The various treasures

of the State will seek a market in its own metropolis, and the untold wealth of the fruitful regions beyond, surpassing in extent and fertility half the area of cultivated Europe, will be poured at her feet. With these aids, and the facilities presented by her noble river, the commerce of Philadelphia requires but the sustaining hand of an earnest home-bred pride, it solicits but attention to the dictates of imperious duty, to be all that her local wants demand, all that honest ambition may covet, all that reasonable hope can justify.

But the length of my letter will excuse further comment to-day.

I remain, dear Sir, &c.

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### LETTER III.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

PHILADELPHIA, August 12th, 1851.

MY DEAR SIR :—The temporary decline of Philadelphia commerce implies only the control of those mysterious agencies, in the fate of communities, which are sometimes observable in the life of individuals. The causes themselves were casual, and future circumstances developing new elements of growth and large capacities of increase, proved that as the causes were transient, so the effects could not be permanent. We saw the thunder-cloud and felt the tempest; but we had not to mourn the fell fury of the lightning nor the destructive upheavings of the earthquake. The cloud once so black and threatening, was seen at length to reveal a silver edge, and the sun to peep through the crevices of its departing shadows. Perhaps these adverse events were only in fulfilment of our lot, since it is said by Jacob Taylor, the early astrologer and versifier of Pennsylvania, that his horoscope reflected

propitious images of unmixed good fortune, except during a brief interval of evil :

“An envious cloud may shade the smiling morn,  
Though fates *ordain the beaming sun's return.*”

The accumulated blessings of Pennsylvania show that no malignant planet presided at her birth, that no evil genius has woven the web of her destiny. Surpassingly rich in herself, independent of other States for the same cause, and furnishing in her great metropolis an outlet and mart to so many of her sisters, she may be said to be poised in the centre of the system, a loadstone of intrinsic power, and attracting to itself all materials of similar value. For reasons like these, she has not been inaptly denominated, the *Keystone State*. But looking to the principles of her civil as well as to her material history, to her geographical position, to her unlimited resources, to her natural and artificial lines of connexion; how, without aid, she can stand alone, and yet in the capacity of her supplies how important to the aid of others;—she may be called not merely the *Keystone State* of the Federal Union, but form the strong and enduring *Arch* itself, destined, perhaps, as she is capable and willing, to support in perpetuity, the grand and majestic edifice of the colossal national pile !

As I have touched upon the external materials of Philadelphia commerce, it is necessary to consider what she possesses in herself to minister to its interests, as a community. It will strike you perhaps with surprise, that Philadelphia should continue to advance, as she really has increased in population and activity, even during the partial eclipse of her commercial sun, at its darkest hour. But a reason will be found for this apparent anomaly, if we look at the state with which she is connected. Amid all her troubles, the fields of Pennsylvania waved in smil-

ing and plentiful luxuriance ; the materials of manufacturing industry were supplied from the tracts of her uncultivated domain ; and other States looked to her for fuel and iron, for the means as well of making machinery as of applying it to productive uses.

In half a century after the English settlement of Pennsylvania, her chief city exceeded the population of New York. She maintained this superiority to the year 1830, when the Erie Canal of New York, in diverting her western trade, and the minerals of our own State in decoying attention and capital from the concerns of foreign commerce, began to manifest their effects on the numbers and wealth of Philadelphia. It may be well to trace this

——— “ tale  
To the dim point where records fail.”

At the time of the English settlement, in 1682, the site of Philadelphia was a dense forest, a broad expanse of magnificent and illimitable wilderness, almost untrodden by civilized foot. New York was, at that time, a flourishing town, with a population of about 5,000 souls. The city of Penn soon passed her as a community, in trade, in population, and in wealth. We have no data which are worthy of reliance, as to the respective populousness of the two cities, until the national Census of 1790. I extract from that and its successors, the following table :

CITY AND COUNTY OF NEW YORK.

Years.	Inhabitants.
1790,	33,131
1800,	60,489
1810,	96,373
1820,	123,706
1830,	197,112
1840,	312,710
1850,	515,394

CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA.

Years.	Inhabitants.
1790,	54,391
1800,	81,009
1810,	111,210
1820,	137,097
1830,	188,961
1840,	258,037
1850,	409,045



It appears, from this table, that Philadelphia was entitled to the consideration of being the largest city of the United States, down to the year 1830, when New York, by the census of that year, exhibited an excess in population of less than 8200 persons. The era of retrogression, in comparison with her neighbour, may be fixed at that lamentable period,—the epoch of so many troubles,—when the Bank of the United States placed itself in an attitude of defiance to the will, the power, and the popularity of President Jackson. The Bank fell, if not in the encounter, at least by the wounds which that encounter inflicted, and buried some of our ablest, however mistaken, citizens, in its stupendous but melancholy ruins. Though New York has advanced with accelerated speed since 1830, yet Philadelphia is close behind her,—*proximus et non longo intervallo*. According to the Census returns, notwithstanding her losses—mineral, financial, and commercial—she has increased in a ratio, exceeding thirty-five per cent., in every ten years.

But I am unable to admit the extent of disparity in population, between the two cities, which the Census of 1850 exhibits. The Census gives to New York 515,394 inhabitants, and to Philadelphia 409,045, but it assigns to the latter 61,202 houses, and to New York the inferior number of 37,730. Now these returns give to New York the enormous and unexampled average of thirteen and five-eighths persons to a house, and to Philadelphia the more usual ratio of six and two-thirds residents to a dwelling. No city in continental Europe, filled with the victims of penury and squalor, has ever presented, in the proportion of its dwellings to its population, so sickening and revolting a picture. The fact is overcharged, to the disparagement of our fair and stately neighbour. The Census finds in Philadelphia nearly twice as many houses

as in New York, for the accommodation of a population only *four-fifths* in number. In this respect the Census is as inconsistent with itself, as it is absurd in the statistics of New York manufactures, to which I shall presently advert. There is no doubt that the area of Philadelphia is greater than New York, but this is attributed to its wider streets and larger yards, as well as to the superiority of its building accommodations. But New York, by a commendable practice, worthy of imitation here, is careful to mark her intermediate progress, every five years, by a local enumeration. In her Census of 1845, the number of inhabitants returned was 371,223, being only 58,513 above that of the preceding national Census. If, then, we adopt the Census of 1850 as true, we make the increase of New York, during the succeeding five years, more than *double* the number of the antecedent lustre. Is there an adequate cause for this inequality, between the two periods? Does not such an incongruity prove, in combination with the unnatural disproportion of inhabitants to dwellings, the existence of some great error in the number assigned to her? In the year 1847, a carefully-prepared estimate of the population of the city and county of New York was made, by division into wards, at the instance of its municipal authorities, under the apportionment of the State. This estimate assigned her but 297,362 inhabitants, an inferior number to that returned by the decennial enumeration of 1840. The disproportion between 297,362 and the number officially returned about two years after, is too striking to consist with the accuracy of both enumerations. Add, if you please, any reasonable estimate for error in computation, and for the two years interval,—say 100,000, a number sufficiently large,—and New York would not reach the population of Philadelphia. But what say the Returns of election themselves?

It cannot be doubted that in the canvass of 1848 for President of the United States, the population of New York flocked to the polls with an ardour and eagerness unknown in this city. The aggregate vote cast in New York was 1000 less than in Philadelphia, or about one-fiftieth more in the latter, than in the former community. If, then, in obedience to these Returns, we concede that in New York an unusual number of persons are huddled together,—the miserable and depraved occupants of one receptacle,—still her own Census of 1845, the statement of the municipal authorities in 1847, and her vote in the autumn of 1848, alike forbid the correctness of the late official enumeration. The truth seems to be, that the two cities are nearly equal in number, the population of New York being less, and Philadelphia more numerous, than what is respectively assigned to each by the national Census of 1850.

Whether it arise from the less crowded condition of Philadelphia than her neighbour, or the presence of better physicians, or the greater efficiency of her sanitary regulations, certain it is, the mortality of the two cities is out of all proportion,—more than 100 per cent. in favour of Philadelphia. All that is wanted by our beautiful town for *comfort*, if not for salubrity, is that some Boyle or Davy, or perhaps such a discoverer as our own Morse, should, by a direct line, conduct a stream of cool and invigorating air from the salted waves of the Atlantic to this fresh-aired, and plentifully, but fresh-watered metropolis. If Philadelphia had such an electric machine for two months in the year, she could part with it to her neighbour for the other ten; where, inverted in its use, and made to convey the atmosphere of her confined alleys, and the stench of her polluted hovels, *into the ocean*, it would confer a benefit, amounting to a blessing!



But Philadelphia, as if for the double purpose of keeping in advance of New York in regard to buildings, and to preserve her augmenting numbers from those diseases incident to close companionship in cities, is stretching out her long arms in every direction. Without an island to limit her magnitude, she is nearly five miles in extent along the Delaware shore, and presents, on the Schuylkill River, a remarkable scene of thrift, activity, and business. In the year 1850, the number of buildings erected was 3,815, and in the present year, it is computed to reach from 4,000 to 5,000 houses. But it is worthy of note, that the structures now in the course of erection are unequalled, for amplitude and expense, by those of any previous period.

Having thus settled the size, the health, and medical prospects of Philadelphia as a community, let us turn to the subject of her business. This is comprised in manufactures, and in commerce. The manufacturing interests of Philadelphia are so large, as alone to give some energy to her foreign and domestic trade. In 1810, those within the corporate jurisdiction of the city, then containing 53,722 inhabitants, were valued in an official Report made to the Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, at the sum of \$9,347,768. I find the following statement in Mr. Hazard's valuable Register of Pennsylvania for the year 1831, as to the extent of this business, within the same municipal limits. The account is accurate as far as it goes, but it omits nearly half as much as it includes. Among other articles, it should have noticed the manufacture of *porcelain*, then pursued with a success, which shows the existence of a material here, susceptible of being made quite equal in beauty to the finest fabrics of that description in France.

“There are in Philadelphia and its vicinity 104 warp-

ing-mills at work, sufficient to employ about 4,500 weavers; dyers, over 200; spoolers, 3,000; bobbin-winders, 2,000: whose wages would amount to \$1,470,040; consume 114,400 lbs. of indigo per annum, and 1820 barrels of flour for sizing; make 81,000 yards per day, or 24,300,000 per annum; at 16 cents, \$3,888,000."

Since the preparation of this statement, machinery has been so variously applied as, by the magic of *steam*, to produce wonders in the way of manufacture. We are informed by a tabular summary, which is founded upon the Census returns of June 30, 1850, and printed in the Commercial List of February 21, 1851, that the capital invested in the manufacturing business in the city and county of Philadelphia, is nearly \$34,000,000, yielding an annual aggregate product of more than \$64,000,000, or nearly twice the former amount! Fine as these returns are, let us turn to the Census for the statement of New York productions, in comparison with those of Philadelphia, and it will be seen with what Midas-like magnificence the materials are transmuted, or how the figures are enlarged:

	NEW YORK.	PHILADELPHIA.
Capital invested in manufactures,	\$34,232,822	\$33,737,911.
Number of hands employed, .	83,620	59,106.
Value of annual products, .	\$105,218,380	\$64,114,112.

Now, when it is considered that the Philadelphia manufacturer has nearly all the raw materials at his elbow, and that the manufacturer of New York has the expense of transporting from a distance most if not all of what he requires, the high profits of the latter in comparison of the former, is a subject of unqualified surprise. But these products, if not indeed the amount of capital invested, are as easily reconciled with probability as the Census in

regard to population. I could easily show that the variety and pecuniary value of our manufactured articles are *two-fold* greater than those of New York.

The means of manufacture in Pennsylvania being so cheap and abundant, activity has been proportionally stimulated. Articles are produced of great variety, and of surpassing excellence. In all her fabrics, Philadelphia aims at superiority. In chemicals, machinery, railway and pleasure carriages, paper-hangings, carpets, and an almost endless diversity of manufactured stuffs, her pre-eminence is unquestioned by the pretensions of rivalry. So much are manufactories the order of the day, that it is said in no community of the same size on the globe, are there so many steam-engines at work, nor any in which they are applied to so great a variety of purposes as in Philadelphia. Unhappily, a Statistical Society, whose promises delighted us with the prospect of many blessings, having ascertained the number of these engines, suddenly evaporated like their steam, or disappeared in their smoke. The tables which were made are extinct or lost, and the valuable society itself, resting from its labours, is no more !

From figures of such magnitude, I know not how to descend to the small fry of publishing establishments and medical colleges. But among the permanent elements of prosperity, if not fairly to be included in the category of manufactured articles, are the *book-publishing business*, the largest by far in this country ; and the annual supply to the world of the United States, of about a *thousand well-made physicians*. The pecuniary results of the book trade may perhaps be less than the literary influence it secures ; but from our unrivalled medical schools, of which there are not less than *six*, Philadelphia derives a great part of her literary and scientific eminence, and the more substantial return of nearly *a million* a year.

But the vital principle of Philadelphia wealth is to be derived from commerce; for this at last crowns the prosperity of all the rest. Half the benefits of her internal trade will not be realized, half the fair results of her domestic industry and products will not be secured, without that reciprocity of exchanges which a foreign commerce supplies. These productions must be shipped and sold to foreign regions, and their fabrics returned and consumed, or sent to the domestic markets of our own country. Let us see whether the marine of Philadelphia is adequate to that immense trade, which will be concentrated within our borders.

We have seen that by the Census of 1830, New York then first took the *lead* as the largest city in the United States. It was at this time, from the causes already adverted to, that the foreign commerce of our city began more sensibly to decline. From '30 to '40 there was no advance, though an appearance of flickering prosperity, resulting from accidental events, gave it temporary life between '35 and '40. From '40 to '45 it was stationary, nor was there much variation till after the year 1845. Since '46, commerce has received an impulse, the extent of which may be seen by the following summary of the number of arrivals at this port:

Years.	Foreign.	Coastwise.	Total.
1845	387	8,029	8,416
1846	459	6,018	6,477
1847	657	18,069	18,726
1848	542	23,921	24,463
1849	585	24,594	25,169
1850	518	27,035	27,553

But the augmentation is more distinctly shown by the *value* of the exports and imports, within the last three years of the same period. The imports, which had dwindled in 1845 to *seven millions and a half*, have gra-



dually risen, and for the last three years have annually exceeded *twelve millions of dollars*. In the year 1848, the value of the exports from Philadelphia was more than *five millions*, and in the year ending July 1, 1850, it amounted to *four millions and a half*, making for imports and exports about *seventeen millions of dollars*. But the statement of Philadelphia commerce is incomplete without the arrivals and tonnage of vessels engaged in the coal trade, at the suburb of Richmond, on the Delaware, a community already so near to Kensington that the waves of population from the two places approach so nearly together, as almost to meet. For 1848 we have the following summary.

Barks.	Brigs.	Schrs.	Sloops.	Boats.	Total.
51	532	4191	448	4750	9993

In these 9,993 vessels were carried one and a quarter millions of tons. The returns are incomplete for 1849 and '50, but I have no doubt from the annual augmentation of the coal trade, that the vessels and freights would show an enhancement in number and magnitude. The value to Pennsylvania of the coal trade at Richmond and elsewhere, adding the produce which is carried besides coal, and the return cargoes, may be safely estimated at from *twenty to thirty millions of dollars* per annum. But I shall return to the subject in a few days.

Yours, very truly.

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## LETTER IV.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

PHILADELPHIA, Aug. 25, 1851.

MY DEAR SIR:—Permit me, for an instant, to go back to the manufactures of Philadelphia before resuming the sub-



ject of its commerce. The amount of capital employed in these factories, their magnificent annual results, the superiority of the fabrics, and the unexampled number and variety of the steam-engines in operation, do not comprise all that may fairly be said of the prospects of these establishments, nor of the degree of excellence which they are destined to attain. The manufacturing spirit so observable at the earliest period of colonial times, was fostered by the utilitarian principles of our forefathers. They taught, as a part of their religious system, the duty of *useful employment*. They enforced this precept with the emphatic authority of law, and confirmed it by adding the sanction of their own example. The English and German Friends inculcated the importance of *trades*. Penn recommended them to his children, and many respectable persons of his own sect, especially in Pennsylvania, carried the sentiment into practice. The manufacture of articles of domestic necessity became a favourite occupation with our people. To the diffusion of this practical taste may be ascribed the happy idea of those scientific associations, which united to form the American Philosophical Society in 1743, and the more recent establishment of the Franklin Institute. In the latter, the scientific principles of the mechanic arts are taught to multitudes of young men, by the ablest teachers.

American skill will moreover be largely aided and improved by the *Philadelphia Female School of Design*, lately begun under the auspices of the Institute, and now connected with it, in the full tide of success. It would be unjust, in referring to this beautiful appendage and valuable auxiliary of the *fine* as well as the *useful arts*, to omit a passing tribute of gratitude to the gifted and accomplished benefactress of her sex and country, to whom we are wholly indebted for its introduction. But I will not do

further violence to her feelings or your own, than to observe, that by the aid of this school, the genius of the nation will have a new and rich field opened for its exercise. By means of the drawings and patterns, so felicitously executed, by its pupils, our country will be enabled to impress upon the products of her industry, a character as national, as distinct, as original, and I have no doubt, as tasteful, elegant, and varied, as the most celebrated specimens of France and England.

But considerable effect must be produced upon the personal characters of mechanics and manufacturers by the influence of the Girard College for Orphans; perhaps the wisest and most beneficent institution of the nineteenth century. After adequate mental training within its walls, the pupils are to be taught *manufactures, navigation*, or some other practical or *useful employment*. From the three hundred inmates now receiving its bounty, there will, in a few years, be a *thousand*, who, snatched by its protection, in early childhood, from the evils attendant on orphanage and penury, and instructed by its paternal discipline in youth and nonage, will form a class of candidates for the manual occupations of life, more numerous and better instructed, than any age or country has ever incorporated with its society. These exposed classes, from which the almshouse and prison are supplied with victims, are made by the sagacity of the founder to give rank and elevation to the mechanic and artisan, and add new dignity and value to their social claims. Such are the elements at work in our midst, to push to their acme the highest efforts of American mind, in the useful departments of art and skill. Who can say, with such aids, what Philadelphia may not achieve as an industrial locality? In the possession of the materials of cheap manufacture, and cherishing a high standard of workman-

ship, what may she not accomplish with the proclivities of her people, assisted by training and enlightened by science ?

But to proceed with the subject of foreign commerce. The mereantile marine of the port cannot be large, to sustain an importation of only twelve millions, and an exportation of less than five millions a year. Since the year 1846, the cash duties received at the Custom House of Philadelphia, have stood as follow :

For 1847,	\$2,904,748 97	For 1849,	\$2,714,965 24
“ 1848,	2,762,093 11	“ 1850,	3,361,112 18

There is every reason to believe that, for the present year, the duties received at our Custom House, will exceed *four millions of dollars*. For a long period anterior to the epoch of 1846, one solitary line of sailing packets to Liverpool, graced the port of Philadelphia. These vessels sailed, at stated periods, once a month, and though built in the most substantial, and equipped and furnished in the best manner, yet, without voluntary shipments of merchandise by their owners, they would have frequently departed and returned, without a cargo. But our venerable townsman, Mr. Thomas P. Cope, being identified with the port as an importer of foreign merchandise before the year 1790, as a ship-owner since 1807, and having established, in conjunction with his sons, his unsurpassed line of packets in the year 1822, perhaps other feelings than those of mere pecuniary profits, have influenced their continuance, through all vicissitudes. It has survived the period when freights were in demand, and now finds itself in the society of three other packet lines to Liverpool, with business enough for all. These several lines of packets are composed of capacious and excellent ships, not only well filled with cargoes of merchandise. but, if I am cor-

rectly informed, *vessels* are in requisition, rather than *freights*.

Within the period of five years, many noble merchantmen have been built at this port, and among them two for the old line of H. & A. Cope & Co., each of 1700 tons burthen. Sailing vessels of the best description, and of a high tonnage, have been constructed and placed among the other lines, within the same period. Less than a year ago was commenced a line of steam propellers from Philadelphia to Liverpool, and as the vessels composing it have proved themselves unequalled for strength and speed, they have imparted increased activity to commerce, and diffused the most cheerful anticipations. Freights and passengers accumulate to the utmost capacity of these steamers. The packet ships to Bremen and New Orleans, and the steamers to Charleston, Richmond, and New York, with various transient vessels, make up the residue of that commercial marine, which is represented in the tabular statement, which I have quoted, of the foreign and coastwise arrivals. In addition to these, a line of steam vessels for the Boston trade, is in preparation, and nearly ready to sail, and an active movement is on foot, with encouraging prospects of success, to communicate more speedily and regularly with New Orleans, by means of the same great staff of commercial intercourse.

In this enumeration of vessels constituting the mercantile navy of Philadelphia, we look in vain for voyagers to London, to France, or to China. The mercantile marine has certainly improved, as well as the exports and imports. But the time is not remote when from four to six East Indiamen were seen lying at our docks together. At that time a cargo from China could not find purchasers in New York. Now, no China ships here are to be seen, and their cargoes are not offered for sale in Philadelphia. Nay,



several tea houses exist among us, whose importations are made exclusively through the more favoured port of our neighbour. But in continuation of this humiliating contrast, compare the exports from Philadelphia of 1796 with those of 1850. In the former year, the value of goods exported from Philadelphia, was more than *seventeen millions and a half of dollars*, and in the latter was only *four and a half millions*! In 1796, our population was about *seventy thousand persons*; in 1850, it approached *half a million of inhabitants*!

In order to heighten this contrast, though it cannot give pleasure to a Philadelphian, it may be well to see how this pyramid, terminating at a point with us, has been inverted by our more fortunate rival. In 1796 the exports of New York, when she contained about fifty-five thousand inhabitants, amounted to about *twelve millions* of dollars, and in 1850, when her population bordered on *half a million*, her exports amounted to \$52,712,789.

While thus far these figures are worthy of reliance, and present an inequality sufficiently remarkable, it may be proper to add that the statistics of the two cities, as presented by the writers of New York, are generally wide of the mark, and transcend the bounds of truth and fairness. For example, a statistical table, prepared in New York, professing to give the comparative population of the principal cities of the commercial world, assigns to Philadelphia in 1840 a population of only 222,493. This would depress her in population below the cities of Lisbon and Dublin. The census of that year exhibited the number of 258,037 inhabitants, and entitled her to rank beside Liverpool, whose population she now exceeds. Another recent table of New York statistics, in regard to trade and tonnage, shows a series of blunders, and the figures, as arrayed, are made to express a language approaching to mendacity



itself. The same spirit of hyperbole on the one hand, and of depreciation, descending almost to disparagement on the other, appears in most of the general and particular delineations of Pennsylvania, which emanate from that quarter. If, as the English writers assert, the disposition to magnify is an American trait, that tendency of the American character is as discernible among our brethren of New York, as anywhere upon this continent. They have certainly much to be proud of, in the luxurious splendour of their crowded and opulent city. Nevertheless, a fair examination would show—not merely a spirit of imitation on the part of New York, in adopting the conveniences and elegancies of Philadelphia, but—that her commercial prosperity has been mainly owing to a temporary oversight, a voluntary dereliction of natural duty, on the part of Philadelphia. Is not all this apparent from the history of Pennsylvania, in comparison with New York, from the earliest period, showing her capacity for larger shipments, and the susceptibilities of the port under a proper guardianship, with adequate cultivation? In 1697, Pennsylvania had been settled only fifteen years, and New York about half a century, and yet the value of the foreign trade of the latter, was only £8000 above the former. Take a subsequent period, say 1760, when Pennsylvania had let in the sun to her smiling fields, and you find that her exports and imports amount to £720,000, and New York to only half a million! This superiority in her commerce was, with some variations, generally maintained during the colonial government. In 1774, it exceeded that of New York by about £150,000, but the dangers of the revolution disturbed its current, and gave to New York a temporary advantage. In 1790, the commerce of Philadelphia amounted to \$7,953,418, and in 1796, to \$17,523,866, being more than six millions in advance of New York!

It is thus manifest that the foreign commerce of Philadelphia bears no just proportion to her ability to sustain it, nor to the requisitions of the internal trade. Such, on the contrary, is its capacity of enlargement, that it is augmented in magnitude and profit by the increase of the marine, or the multiplication of the means provided for conveyance. It results, then, that some defect must prevail in our policy, the removal of which is indispensable to the restoration of the proper measure of Philadelphia commerce. Let us see what this is, and whether the evil is adscititious and remediable, or intrinsic and unalterable.

In surveying the cause of a weakness in any particular part of the system, the cause of any partial and anomalous decay, where the organic functions are sound, and all the other members are vigorous and healthy, it is obvious that the complaint must arise from some temporary or casual agency, rather than from constitutional defect, or the existence of vital disease. We shall find, in the case before us, that what looks like a general distemperature, which stagnates the juices and disturbs the processes of nature, is nothing more than the want of local exercise of the part, the product of accident or mistake, the result of unnatural and voluntary inaction.

We have seen that the annual imports of Philadelphia, do not much exceed twelve millions of dollars. Does this amount of foreign merchandise supply the consumption of Philadelphia—as well the quantity required for her own population, as the large demands of her numerous customers in the South and West? If twelve millions be wholly insufficient, whence is the immense residue derived, but through another port and in other bottoms than in those of Philadelphia—that is, through the port and in the bottoms of New York? That this desertion

of Philadelphia is *the true cause of the decline of her commerce* is evident; and a little reflection will convince us of the truth of another proposition, equally self-evident. These large importations through the port and in the vessels of New York, *constitute the real source of the unparalleled prosperity of that city.*

In the year ending July 1, 1850, the value of foreign importations into the United States, was one hundred and seventy-eight millions of dollars. When we consider the populousness and wealth of Pennsylvania, containing nearly two and a half millions of inhabitants, and the immense, wealthy, and populous regions beyond, which are either chiefly or wholly dependent upon her metropolis for their foreign supplies, is the estimate of *fifty millions of dollars*, as the aggregate value of foreign merchandise here used and distributed, more than her fair contingent? *As Philadelphia is admitted to be the great distributor and seller of merchandise to the Western and Southern country*, no one acquainted with the magnitude of the business, will deem the valuation of *fifty millions* other than inadequate. Of the one hundred and seventy-eight millions of our foreign imports, one hundred and eleven millions are introduced into the country through the port of New York, and twelve millions through that of Philadelphia. It follows that less than *one-fourth* only of the commerce which belongs to this port is done by ourselves, and more than *three-fourths* are permitted to be done for us by strangers. In other words, *one-third of the entire commerce of New York*, so justly her pride and boast, *is drawn from the custom of Philadelphia!* Take this one-third from New York and give it to Philadelphia, together with its accompaniments and profits, and the two cities would stand in the positions which they should respectively occupy, in regard to each other.

But we not only permit New York to be the importer for Philadelphia, and thus enable her to construct and sustain her noble and numerous ships, but we aid her by making direct contributions to her marine. Of the 34 vessels sailing between New York and Canton, the interest of *more than one-sixth* of the whole, is owned by citizens of Philadelphia. Thus Philadelphia supplies *one-sixth* of all the imports into New York from China, without reaping a tittle of its benefits; and our merchants voluntarily import in her vessels, and through her port, the sum of *thirty-eight millions* annually.

Now this state of things is not more humiliating, than its mischiefs are extensive and deplorable. The expenses of breaking bulk, and shipping the goods to Philadelphia, the profits on the cargoes, the commissions on the sales, the duties paid at the Custom-House, are all so much grist to the mill, so much tribute paid into the coffers of New York. But these vessels, thus laden with imports for the Philadelphia market, not only arrive at New York, but *they carry away from New York* rich cargoes in return. These exports it is which fill her rivers with crafts, burdened with the fruits of the field, and the products of the factory, and which tax to their utmost capacity every avenue, by canal and railway, leading to New York. Does not this subjection of our foreign commerce to the shipping of New York, abundantly explain the reason why so small a portion of the western produce, which finds its way to the Atlantic, is transmitted through our public works to Philadelphia? The law by which trade is governed, is that which the *market* commands. Where the highest prices are to be had, there, in despite of distance and difficulty, is the supply. In vain will closeness of neighbourhood and facility of transit, hold out their allurements, without that brisk and superior market,



which is excited by a lively and extensive foreign commerce. Philadelphia may build railways and excavate canals; she may open vast avenues to the furthest extremity of the West, the North, and the South. She may possess all the elements of a golden opulence in her noble State; yet, in the vicinity of such a rival as New York, if she decline, or be not sedulous in fostering the opportunities of *the carrying trade*, all these advantages are valueless, every sign of prosperity is unreal, illusive, and shadowy. She will become effeminated by inactivity, and fall a suburban district, if not an unresisting prey of New York. Though the most luscious fruit may hang from lofty boughs, and their bending garlands seductively wave in her view,—though her palsied hand may be stretched forth to grasp it, some fitful breeze will blow away the branches as fast as she approaches. But with a foreign commerce, commensurate in magnitude to the immensity of her resources, her natural and artificial highways will groan under the burdens of a trade hastening from the vast interior, and augmented from her own magnificent domains. “It will,” to use the language of one of her most sagacious men,\* “raise her as a city to the very pinnacle of commercial grandeur; to the very first rank among those which have distinguished themselves as conspicuous marts; to the size of London, Canton, Calcutta,—nay, *beyond that of any emporium on the globe.*”

Is the prize worth contending for? Are ease and inactivity so desirable in themselves, that we should relinquish all other blessings for their enjoyment? Should the merchant of Philadelphia hesitate as to the line of his duty? For every importation he orders through another city, he inflicts a deep injury on his own, and does a real injury to himself. He undermines the fortunes of his own

\* Samuel Breck, Esq.



community, by giving the nourishment necessary to sustain her, to another, whose absorbing demands are sapping the foundations of her own fortunes. He contributes to his own impoverishment, in abstracting from his home those elements of life and growth, upon which all within the domestic borders, depends for vitality and vigour. An opposite policy would be to all the interests of Pennsylvania what the dew and the light are to vegetation, aiding them to expand and flourish. It would act as a vent to that sluggish internal trade, which, by means of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and the other improvements of the State, we have been so anxious to attract to Philadelphia.

In proportion as the foreign commerce is neglected or diminishes, the domestic trade will disappear or decline, while in the same degree that the former is fostered and enlarged, the latter is encouraged and accumulates. Foreign commerce and internal trade must go hand in hand, or stop in company; being mutually dependent, they must coexist or die together. All that is wanted are the requisite energy and will of our own people, to break down all opposition to a career, for Pennsylvania, as peerless and triumphant as the unapproachable superiority of her natural resources. With only reasonable *sea room*, with merely a *fair chance*, by means of the possession of her legitimate business; of that trade which is properly and intrinsically her own; of that commerce which is necessary for the supply of her own wants and those of her customers; Philadelphia would, in a few years, be restored to her original state, to her former ascendancy—THE METROPOLITAN EMPRESS OF THE WESTERN WORLD!

But your patience and my limits forbid a longer letter, to-day.

Always, dear Sir, yours truly, &c.

## LETTER V.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

PHILADELPHIA, September 2, 1851.

MY DEAR SIR:—I profess to detail with accuracy what I give you as facts; and whether in relation to particular statements, or general statistics, I do not fear an authoritative contradiction. But in regard to *estimates of numbers*, there is room for latitude of sentiment, and diversities of opinion. For these, I attempt only an approximation, and prefer the error of being clearly within, than possibly beyond, the limits of probability.

I repeat, then, that more than *one-sixth* of all the ships which sail from New York to China, are owned in Philadelphia; and of the aggregate value of the foreign merchandise, used and sold in Philadelphia, amounting, as I compute, to at least *fifty millions annually*, that *thirty-eight millions* are brought into the country, in the shipping, and through the port of New York. It must be remembered, also, as a necessary consequence of this voluntary abandonment of the port, that of the vast quantities of the western produce, which seek an outlet to the Atlantic, how small a proportion—about *one-fifteenth* of the whole—finds its way to Philadelphia through the public works of the State. It follows, that in order to assist the flow of the domestic trade in this direction, we must give it the inducement of a foreign mart.

It is, nevertheless, apparent, from the aid contributed to the marine of New York, and the sum of our importations, through that port and our own, that the foreign business of Philadelphia is large; and that from the position and productive wealth of Pennsylvania, the capacities of her metropolis, as an entrepôt of trade, are

greatly beyond those of her sister city. These facts, and others which might be mentioned, furnish proof that with all the losses which have been sustained by our citizens, the capital to build ships and maintain them, exists, in this city, in all necessary abundance. Why, then, should not an *independent* foreign commerce be a subject of public concern, proportioned to its transcendent public importance?

The trade of the West will soon be invited to Philadelphia by the shortest avenue to the Atlantic, which Nature permits. Her mercantile marine has received an awakening impulse. An outlet connects her with the ocean, so broad and deep as to be capable of bearing upon its majestic bosom a mighty commerce, and the largest ships of the world. What remains but the performance of a positive and social, I had said, a high and sacred duty, on the part of those who are entrusted with the guardianship of the complicated, but delicate and pervading interests of her commerce?

We have seen that more than ONE-THIRD of the *entire foreign commerce of New York is supported by the custom, or supplied by the capital of Philadelphia*. New York is the *importer*, and Philadelphia is only the *seller* or *distributor* of her imported commodities, to the West and South. What capacities of achievement and expansion would the aggregate of this business confer upon Philadelphia, if added to that which she already possesses! This *thirty-eight millions of annual importations*, diffuses through the city of New York, in its collateral benefits, a floating wealth twice its equivalent in pecuniary value. How long will the Philadelphia merchant, from his elegant, indeed, but comparatively tame and quiet home, continue to visit New York, and looking around him on the wilderness of masts at her wharves; on the crowded avenues of

her rich internal commerce; on the busy din and ceaseless hum of activity on every side around him; on her magnificent thoroughfares, glittering with opulence; on her stately and gorgeous temples, multiplying as if by the hand of magic;—vying in ornate splendour and luxurious taste with the princely capitals of Europe;—passively submit to what he could so readily alter, so easily remedy? Will he supinely permit the *one-third* of all this commercial grandeur and overflowing abundance, which rightfully belongs to the fortunes of his own fair city, to be enjoyed, without an effort, by her rival? I may be told, that the process of a great commercial revolution is difficult, and that a Herculean task is proposed. But it may be answered, that

“The wise and active conquer difficulties,  
By daring to attempt them; sloth and folly  
Shiver and shrink at sight of toil and hazard,  
And MAKE the impossibilities they fear.”

The process is a natural operation, and the object of easy attainment. *First, abstract from New York what Philadelphia ought herself to appropriate, and give the profits of this business to the Philadelphia merchants.* But, it is asserted, that the refusal to import through New York, or to employ the vessels of that port, would entail a temporary inconvenience. Suppose the objection to be well founded. Is not such a sacrifice demanded by the importance of the crisis, and the magnitude of the object itself?

When the *non-importation Resolutions* of 1765 were proposed, they met with the ready signature of nearly every Philadelphia merchant. The principle in both cases is similar, if not the same. The resolutions did not so directly involve that higher element of freedom, which the Colonies believed were afterwards assailed. These



resolutions chiefly sought to preserve and extricate the distinctive interests of the colony, from the ruinous monopoly of England. The personal interests of individuals, the selfish idea of being enriched at the expense, and to the injury of all the rest, did not interpose an impediment to their universal acceptance. Selfish objections were relinquished to the one overruling principle of society; the one fundamental law of the social state; that private convenience is ultimately promoted by yielding it, for a time, to the public benefit.

All who are acquainted with the history of our public improvements in the State, and in the city, know with what a spirit of keen and sagacious energy they were conceived and finished. The artificial common roads of the State, and the introduction of pure water into the city, two objects, as they were, of the first necessity, so they received the earliest attention. At the times when they were respectively proposed, these enterprises were too novel in the other States and cities of the Union, and too great and expensive in themselves, not to meet with opposition from discontents at home. Their projectors, not deterred by the selfish dread of personal trouble, and un-intimidated by the fear of unpopularity, steadily pursued their laudable objects. If pecuniary views or sinister motives had predominated in the private and public councils, perhaps several of those works which we now contemplate with pride and wonder, would never have been attempted or accomplished. Mighty rivers, bays, and lakes, which nature had separated, and taught to flow in solitary grandeur, have been made to communicate by the daring hand of art; the vast mineral treasures of the interior have been unburied; and artificial means have been provided for their conveyance to the furthest extremities of this mighty nation. If the people of Pennsylvania were



deficient in the genius of expanded and public enterprise; if the love of ease had been indulged; or the dictates of engrossing selfishness had been listened to or consulted; these monuments of their liberality and spirit would not exist to enrich and illustrate their State; nor would the Pennsylvania Railroad and other meritorious undertakings supply us with subjects of satisfaction and complacency.

In the great work of regenerating our commerce, the importance of union and concert should not pass unheeded. I have already noticed the *non-importation Resolutions* by the merchants of Philadelphia, in 1765, which preceded the great union of the colonies at the American Revolution. Without looking to remote ages, or other countries, for examples, our own city and Boston give us additional instances of the value of concerted action, for promoting a common cause. A regular plan was adopted by the merchants of Philadelphia, in 1822, to induce their respected and now venerable fellow-citizen and his firm, to establish a line of packets to Liverpool. Mr. Cope's vessels had been sailing for fifteen years between Philadelphia and other ports of the world—to China as well as to Europe;—but, according to the prevailing custom of ship-owners, without a *regular day* of departure. The idea of having a line of ships that would sail, *full or not full*, and without reference to the weather or the tide, *at prescribed times*—though without example in Europe or even in maritime England—has impressed itself on the minds of merchants in this city as well as in New York. I will send you, as a postscript to my letter, a copy of the document, which was signed at the period of its date, by the respectable and eminent merchants whose names it bears. The paper, which is now rather of historical than practical value, pledges, by way of inducement to the establishment

of a line of packets, the subscribers to a *preference* of the vessels composing it, over transient and irregular ships. The parties to this arrangement were aware of the possible occurrence of inconveniences and perhaps of losses, among its probable results; but the permanent benefit which a superior line of vessels, sailing at known stated periods, would confer upon the port, in giving stability to its trade, counteracted or neutralized, on the part of the owners and the shippers, all temporary or minor objections.

An instance may be cited of the manly public spirit of Boston, when one of the Cunard steamers was frozen in her dock, and the navigation was obstructed for miles by the thickest ice. She could be extricated from her prison, and enabled to sail *on her day*, only by the united exertions of the multitude. The merchants were aware of the effects of such an accident on the reputation of their port, if the steamer were prevented, by the severity of winter, from sailing at the appointed time. The probability of such an occurrence, on an exposed coast and in a northern climate, had been foreseen and predicted, before the selection of that port was made, as the point of arrival and departure. The people had experienced the benefits which the visits of these noble vessels were conferring upon their town, and they resolved, rather than part with the steamers, to overcome even the hostile rigour of the opposing elements. The population, it is said, turned out as in a common cause. Those who were unable or unwilling to work, gave their assistance in money, and the workmen engaging heartily in their business, cut a clear passage for the vessel, and freed her in time from the chains of an ice-bound harbour. Noble men! you succeeded, because you deserved success. Boston earned by her energy, all the advantages which these steamers secure, and she still meritoriously retains them as visitors at her port, in

the face of all obstacles, and in spite of some untoward events.

It is not to call up the ugly genius of rivalry, that I cite this example of resolution and public spirit. Our merchants form a class of men in whom a nobler principle of action can be addressed and awakened, than the humble one of emulation,—the high and controlling principle of *duty*! I would not arouse them because their neighbours on either side, are in motion, but to avert the calamity which their diligence and our inattention may occasion. Or, to state the case in positive and not in comparative terms, I would incite them to cultivate their foreign commerce, in order to secure the perfect fruition of those distinguished blessings which Nature, with so prodigal a hand, has scattered around us, of those elements of trade and wealth, which a discerning spirit and munificent expenditure have placed within our reach, and now tender to our acceptance.

Mercantile men are rendered, by traffic, exceedingly keen in the discovery of their interest; and generally pursue that line of policy which is supposed to promote it. But they sometimes err, from an excess of timidity, and neglect or disparage general advantages, by too close an adherence to what is purely or exclusively personal. This was not the principle of action by which the basis of our city's prosperity was laid, nor that upon which the old merchants of Philadelphia proceeded. They considered themselves as members of the same community, and while each was intent upon his separate pursuit, all were bound together by a bond of common affinities,—by the ties of a common lot, a common danger, a common misfortune, or a common success. The incentive to activity may be a blind and narrow principle, or it may proceed from an enlarged and enlightened spirit. In one

case, self-interest is a degrading and ignoble passion, the attribute of native meanness, or the mark of a man without a soul. In the other, it becomes a lofty and benevolent instinct, mixed with sentiment and ennobled by patriotism. It is then the parent and the nurse of virtue, the kind minister of meritorious deeds on earth, the presiding angel which urges and attends man to heaven!

As individuals, we are connected with the community in which we live by a thousand ligaments, which none but a sojourner with his property and his hopes at a distance, can repudiate or sever. The merchant of Philadelphia who employs his capital or shipping in New York, like him who imports his merchandise into that metropolis, acts in forgetfulness of an original duty to himself and his neighbour. He stops, at its source, the flow from that fountain which secures them both from the dangers of thirst; and he abstracts the elements of vitality and growth from that plant which protects them from the miseries of hunger. In proportion, as he throws capital into the lap of New York, he swells, in magnitude and power, the gigantic wave of her fortunes, which irresistibly attracts as a magnet, and impels or absorbs within the reach of its vortex, everything that may be swept by the headlong impetuosity of its current. He curtails the value of property at home by diminishing the capital necessary to keep it; and in accumulating elsewhere the appliances which would secure domestic success, he takes away all that would make his own city great and prosperous.

But it is said, that the Philadelphia merchants will not make the exertion, nor practise the self-denial necessary to accomplish so great a purpose. You, perhaps, have lived long enough among us to hear the complaint and imbibe the opinion, which its repetition is so apt to inspire,



that they are deficient in public spirit, and that they acquiesce in their maritime losses as an incurable evil, and the present fate of Philadelphia as an inevitable doom. I do not sympathize in such feelings, nor with persons who utter such sentiments. It is manifest that Philadelphia has never wanted enterprise or public spirit, and that her prostrate commerce is the result of combined mistake and calamity. Two events of contemporaneous origin, diminished at once her foreign commerce and her inland trade. The Erie Canal abstracted the trade of the West, at the time that the mineral wealth of the interior was absorbing the minds and engulfing the capital, which constituted the life-blood of the metropolis. But this very decline of our commercial interests had its origin in gigantic projects at a distance, in causes which prove not merely the existence, but the eminent activity of the spirit of enterprise. The losses which, in many instances, were entailed by these investments, have doubtless lessened the ability, as they would naturally cool the ardour for South Sea bubbles, or mere projects of *moonshine*. But if, from the causes adverted to, *hundreds* only are given where *thousands* were expected, for the advancement of public objects, it may reasonably be ascribed to the influence of late events in our physical and financial career. When the palmy days of a golden commerce shall return, the minds of our citizens will expand with the improvement of their fortunes. Human nature is pretty much the same, the world over. It is rendered public-spirited or narrow, self-sacrificing or selfish, liberal or close-handed, diligent or slothful, energetic or relaxed, according to the circumstances which surround it, or the dominion of the influences to which it is exposed. The times when a single cargo amounted almost to a fortune, have left Philadelphia, and fled to New York. In bringing back

those days of princely wealth, we summon with them the companions which, as human nature is constituted, are generally found in their society—large plans, extensive undertakings, and the spirit of a prompt and exalted munificence. When these principles are fully awakened and in operation, all the elements of prosperity will be brought into harmonious play, and make the State and the City, what nature evidently intended them to be,—the mutual aids of each other—and forming together the richest State and greatest City of the Union. It is not necessary to say more in praise of the Philadelphia merchant,—after viewing the broad and deep foundations of her renown and greatness, as laid by himself,—than is recorded of the immortal architect of St. Paul's in London. "If," says the inscription on his tomb, "you ask for my monument, look around you!"

If a tithe of the energy and self-devotion were applied, at the present juncture, and for present objects, which were displayed by this city in laying the corner-stone of her former eminence and wealth, the richest success would crown the effort. I do not believe that a class of men like the merchants of Philadelphia, whose history is marked by the triumph of art over every form of physical nature, will stop in the prosecution of an undertaking, deliberately assumed, and now only half accomplished. The Pennsylvania Railroad was intended to open a market for that vast interior trade, which was waiting for a conveyance to Philadelphia. Its completion, which we shall soon witness, will pour upon us a flood of Southern and Western produce, and swell beyond any conception we can form, from experience or tradition, the volume of our domestic trade. The contemporaneous completion of ulterior lines of railway, beyond its western terminus, at Pittsburg, and the construction of a diverging arm of the grand body from

Sunbury to Erie, will render tributary to Philadelphia, the teeming Lake at two of its most important harbours, a rich and extensive region of the southern country, and the largest and most fertile portion of the great valley of the Ohio. This immense and opulent trade is impatiently waiting for a transit. New York, at an expense of twenty-four millions of dollars, and Baltimore, at an expense of fifteen millions, are struggling to participate in its inappreciable benefits. The prize is really within the control of our great emporium, unless by neglecting the foreign trade, and not offering as ready and high a market, she may let it pass to her quicker and more assiduous neighbours.

But such a story will not be told of Philadelphia. In spite of persons among us whose interests lay in the North or the South; of the opposition of secret designs and open enmity; of fears for the City Charter, and of the objectionable nature of the enterprise itself; the Pennsylvania Railroad Company was called into existence, and the work has triumphed, *without a dollar of debt*, over every form of impediment. It is firmly seated in the honest pride, the warm affections, and animated hopes of the people. Half the labour and self-sacrifice which secured this incipient, this onward step to our high destiny, will render the result of the advance permanent and complete. If her labourers stop here, they halt in mid-career; they go half way, only to recede; they omit the performance of the more valuable half of what constitutes an essential part of the original work. This other half is indispensable to the perfect and complete success of the whole. With internal resources and a domestic commerce, thus extensive and secure, beyond the reach of any competitor; with a coastwise trade *far greater than the whole foreign tonnage of New York*, and destined, from the increase of the an-

thracite coal business, to tenfold its present extent; with a large manufacturing capital, and its various materials, lying in untold profusion, through Pennsylvania, combined with the talent and science to render them eminently available;—with all these natural and artificial advantages,—what do we require but an adequate COMMERCIAL MARINE, for the exportation of their commodities to foreign countries, and MERCHANTS who will *prefer its encouragement by their imports*, to fostering the commerce, so barren in its returns to them, of a sister city? If we are true to ourselves, can any one doubt that the foreign commerce will be commensurate in magnitude with the agricultural and manufacturing industry, and with the resources of the interior and extra territorial trade.

It is a specious and plausible, but dangerous fallacy, to speak of Philadelphia and the State, as destined to be great in manufactures and agriculture alone. These elements of their wealth and power ought not to be neglected, but earnestly sustained and developed. And shame upon the perversity or blindness of her statesmen, that both have been stunted of their natural proportions, by the absence of the steady, genial sunshine of protective legislation! Iron, that great staple of Pennsylvania, should be enabled to compete, in her own markets, at least, with the foreign article, in order that its use, in the United States, should not be supplanted by an inferior fabric, which degrades the standard of domestic production. It is a public concern, that the railways of the United States, of which *nearly 2,000 miles have actually been completed within the last year*, should not be laid with foreign iron!—But build up to the highest point the great interests of iron and coal in Pennsylvania, and neglect or overlook the interests of foreign commerce in Philadelphia, and half the blessings of the former are curtailed,



half their glories are overshadowed and obscured! In truth, if we would cultivate either the agriculture, the manufactures, the mineral resources, or the extra-territorial trade of Pennsylvania, we must expose them all to the light and heat of foreign commerce. But if we would hinder their growth and prevent their expansion, we must permit this great city to remain under the protecting or blighting shade of another port, and thus deprive those material interests of that sun which is necessary to invigorate their roots, to teach their branches to shoot forth, and their fruit to increase and multiply!

The resources of Pennsylvania and of her immediate dependencies, are sufficient to build up Philadelphia to the size of London. She already, as I have hinted, exceeds Liverpool in numbers and dimensions. At this time, she stands with her sister, New York, above Berlin, Vienna, and Naples. An exact enumeration of her people would place her beside Constantinople; and there cannot be a doubt, from the rapidity of her recent progress, that before the lapse of another lustre, our American *Athens* will contest the palm of numbers with the proud Capital of the Czar of all the Russias. But her ratio of increase, great as it has been, will be immensely augmented by the attractive influences of the Anthracite trade, and the accessions which the various railway connexions, now on the verge of completion, will concentrate within her borders. The interposing barrier of *the Gate of the West*, formed by the County of Erie, in Pennsylvania, must throw New York upon the dangerous navigation of the Lakes, for any participation in the commerce of the Western States. It is a perilous avenue in storms; it is wholly closed in winter; it is liable to interruption in war. The tempests of the great Lakes are frequent and fearful; and the winters are long and severe. They were the scene of

memorable conflicts in the war of 1812. The Rideau Canal, which is navigable for ships, and may serve as the medium of naval armaments, connects them with the St. Lawrence. But the communication of those extensive tracts with Philadelphia, whose State is interposed between them and New York, is therefore shorter and more direct. As an inland route, it is free from the perils of shipwreck; exempt from the interruptions of winter; at a distance from the calamities of war.

Vain, very vain, will be the efforts of New York writers to arrest her career, if her own citizens would foster an *independent* foreign commerce, by being their own importers. Tabular statistics may depreciate her numbers in the face of an official Census, which itself is clearly unjust. Large and elaborate treatises of the same parentage, and prepared for the mercantile public of the world, may lengthen *a fourth* her real distance from the sea, and limit the accessibility of the port to vessels of only *five hundred tons burthen!* In the face of these, the claims of truth and justice will finally triumph, and she will stand as far superior to New York, in material wealth and greatness, as her community is confessedly before her in all the attributes of scientific and social eminence.

We want but a few persons like Stephen Girard, his predecessors and cotemporaries, to do all that is necessary for Philadelphia. It was by means of commerce, primarily and chiefly,—*of Philadelphia commerce*,—that this greatest millionaire of his age in the United States, amassed his colossal estate. Others, and not a few, who followed in his footsteps, or adopted his policy, generously, though unequally, partook of his success. He and others have done for Philadelphia, more than even the scholastic and benevolent Roscoe ever did for Liverpool. They have laid the foundations of a renown, deep and firm enough

for their successors to rear a superstructure, which shall fix the gaze and command the admiration of successive ages of mankind. Is her foreign commerce then an uninviting field of adventure for Philadelphia enterprise, or unattractive for the investment of foreign capital?

If subscriptions were opened for a line of large steam-vessels, upon the most approved principles of construction for safety and speed, to sail on regular days to London or Liverpool, would not British capitalists aid the enterprise? They will see, from the outline I have given you of the materials of commerce here, that the destiny of Philadelphia is gigantic, and only wants the helping hand of a *steam marine* to make the apex of its monument as towering, as its base is wide and immovable. She requires these fleet messengers to convey the knowledge of her intrinsic greatness, and the grounds of her superiority over New York, to Europe; and to command, as she ought, her recognition at home, as the great port and city of the continent. No one can say or compute what would be her present condition, in comparison with New York, if, on the introduction of steam-vessels at that port, they had been introduced into this. An impetus would have been given to the deliberate movements of her dignified respectabilities of trade. Life, health, and animation would have been infused into her moral as well as physical circulation. It would have invited what New York has secured,—the sustaining element of capital from a distance. For it is the *ingenium* of each people, and the different natures of their respective resources, which, more than anything else, mark and distinguish the two cities. One has a wealth of her own, as firm as the everlasting hills of Pennsylvania. It is as fixed and abiding as the stability of her traders. Though temporarily, and for years, depressed, this capital is still existent; and

though long delayed, is each day returning to her, from the interior, with geometrical increase. The other has a population equally removed from the cautious Knickerbocker of her early annals, and the more eager Puritan of subsequent times;—a society, in short, of better ingredients and characteristics for pushing a lively and flourishing trade,—but withal more diversified in character, language, and descent,—than any city of the globe. This intermixture of nations, and the commercial objects which have attracted their impatient and adventurous spirits, have imparted the glow and rapidity of their own characters to all their schemes of enterprise. With a capital as fluctuating as her inhabitants, and as capricious as the chances upon which her ardent and hopeful children rely, the fortunes of New York are essentially and intrinsically external, and as readily affected by every wind of intelligence, as the lady delineated by Addison, in representation of the fickleness of public credit.

With another letter, I hope finally to relieve you and myself.

Yours, sincerely, &c.

P. S. Subjoined, is a copy of the document referred to in the body of this letter.

Under a conviction that considerable advantage will result to the mercantile interests of the city of Philadelphia, from the establishment of a line of packet-ships, to sail from this port to Liverpool, and from thence to this port at regular stated periods; and sensible of the propriety of offering such inducements as will be likely to produce an arrangement for that purpose on the part of some of our respectable ship-owners; and it being understood that Thomas P. Cope & Sons of this city, have consented to incur the expense and hazard of establishing such a line of packets, on the simple condition of a preference being given to them:

We, the subscribers, do agree and pledge ourselves to instruct our shipping agents in Liverpool to give a decided preference in the transportation of our goods from thence to this city, to such line of packets; and we also agree, that in the event of our shipping merchandise of any de-



scription to Liverpool, we will give a similar preference to the vessels composing such line.

EARP & BROTHERS,	THOS. SHEWELL,
KONIGMACHER & Co.,	JOHN G. OLIVER & Co.,
ROGERS & BROTHERS,	ROBT. KID,
SAMUEL KNIGHT,	EDWARD WILSON,
LOHRA & CARLILE,	WM. WAYNE & Co.,
C. S. & T. W. SMITH,	JOHN MOSS,
WM. W. HOWELL & Co.,	STONE & TODD,
JAMES ROGERS,	SIMMS & CREIGHTON,
RICHARD PAXSON,	JAMES WOOD,
JOSEPH PLEASANTS,	MARSHS & SHEPHERD,
BENJAMIN & ELLIS CLARK,	WM. HOOD & Co.,
SAMUEL THOMPSON,	DOUGHTY & BUDD,
ALLEN ARMSTRONG,	JOSEPH WHITE,
WHITE, JOHNSON & TINGLEY,	THOMAS COOPER,
THOS. & JAMES FASSIT,	JOSEPH P. HORNER.

PHILADELPHIA, February 27, 1822.

## LETTER VI.

FROM THE SAME TO THE SAME.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 26, 1851.

MY DEAR SIR:—You perceive that while I lay stress upon natural advantages, for the promotion of trade, I ascribe much to the genius and contributions of enterprise. We cannot depend upon unassisted nature or the spontaneous bounty of Heaven, for the means of enjoyment or the supply of our necessities. Though the prophet was fed by ravens, *man* was required to toil. The teamster in Esop saw that a passive invocation to Jupiter, would not extricate him from the slough; but that the earnest application of his own shoulder to the wheel, would alone engage the needful attention to his prayers. It was characteristic of a Spanish Council to refuse an offer to im-

prove the navigation of the Tagus, because God, who had made the river with its obstructions, could, of his own pleasure, if he wished, have fashioned it otherwise, without assistance. But there are few blessings without alloy, and Providence mostly requires the co-operation of human agency to confer upon these a practical value, or bring them to productive account. We, in Pennsylvania, are certainly not chargeable with slighting the beneficence of nature; we have not been inactive, though we have still something to perform; and while that is to be done, the great work is unfinished.

The natural wealth of the State—thanks to the expenditure of two hundred millions of private capital, and a considerable public debt,—is partially developed and accessible. A railway or canal will soon be within the reach of each farm, and the coal, the iron, the copper, the marble, and other valuable minerals of the State, have all the desired facilities of transit, from their situations in the interior, to tide-water and to market.

But measures are in operation which will benefit our sluggish real estate, both in its annual and permanent value. Under the favouring influences of a well-digested Sinking Fund, the public debt of the Commonwealth is now in the course of rapid diminution. In about ten years the whole debt may be extinguished, without omitting any necessary expenditure to the public works, whose utility to the citizen is as clear, as their advantage to the revenues is certain. At a time when private corporations and various States are deepening and enlarging the capacity of their canals, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will not permit her noble aqueducts to fall into decay, especially, the great artery known as the main line of canal navigation to Pittsburg. Such an avenue, as an auxiliary of trade, is almost as indispensable for the trans-

mission of heavy merchandise, as the railway for the more speedy transit of passengers, live-stock, and light or perishable commodities. Recent surveys have made engineers more familiar with the depressions of the Alleghanies. Who can doubt, with the increasing knowledge of their topography, that a continuous canal, neither stopping at Columbia, nor interrupted by an interposing chain of mountains, will soon unite the eastern with the western division of the State? The easy gradients of the Pennsylvania Railway, in the mountain region, prove its susceptibility to the purposes of an aqueduct, and the enlargement in progress of the Union Canal, connecting the Pennsylvania works with those of the Schuylkill Navigation Company, will secure to the east and the west a continuous canal and a continuous railway. With these connexions indefinitely prolonged by the Ohio River, improved in its navigation by Mr. Ellett, and by branching railways in all directions, what more can be desired for easy communication with the West? The increasing ability of the Commonwealth, will enable her to apply a larger portion of the resources of the public works, to their benefit and extension; and the North Branch Canal when completed, will open a rich field of husbandry and minerals, and impart new life and energy to one of the richest districts of Pennsylvania.

Other measures are in progress which cannot fail, in conjunction with these, to bring about a propitious change in our commercial prospects. The population of Philadelphia, now divided into independent jurisdictions, will act with more efficiency, when blended and indivisible. A separation of interests produces confusion of councils, perhaps a lurking feeling of local jealousy, which prevents the sacrifice of minor questions and a hearty devotion to the common weal. The jarring elements of various ad-

joining corporations, limited in extent while co-ordinate in power, are unfavourable to a commanding influence at Harrisburg and Washington. But to the common sentiment of a large community, to the united voices of nearly half a million of freemen, asking for a boon, a privilege, or a right, what assembly would be unheeding or indifferent? Grave questions also connected with the port, and even the greater interests of public health and popular order, are all dependent upon corporate union, and will be settled by its accomplishment.

While Philadelphia is thus melting her corporate fragments into one municipal mass, Pennsylvania, in order to attract money to her metropolis, and secure convenience in its custody and transmission, will increase her rate of interest, and enlarge her banking capital. Why should Pennsylvania be restricted to six per cent., as the legal usance, when money habitually commands a higher rate, and when the local law of New York permits seven, and that of Louisiana nine per cent. per annum? Conceding that it may be wise to guard the prices of loans by restrictions and penalties, no one will contend that the limitation should be such as to banish capital from our borders, to a neighbouring city.

Of the banking capital of Philadelphia, it is enough to say that the cautious policy of the Legislature has prevented it from being more than one-fourth of what is enjoyed by the city of New York, and not more than one-half of what is wanted for the just purposes, the fair conveniences, and the known necessities of mercantile affairs. The void created by the failure of the Pennsylvania Bank of the United States, and two other local institutions, has not been supplied. An adequate appreciation of the paramount truth, that the prosperity of this metropolis is identified with that of the Commonwealth,



will lead to the relinquishment of the legislative error in regard to banking capital and the rate of legal interest;—of a policy as deeply prejudicial to the State and the local interests of Philadelphia, as it is advantageous to her great maritime rival.

Permit me now to run a rapid parallel between Pennsylvania and New York, with a view to adjust the account with their commercial capitals, and to fix, with greater precision, their respective points of contrast. If Philadelphia was able for more than a century of her short existence, to eclipse New York in the race of commerce, and under the disadvantage of being the younger city, why should she not regain her position? The difference in comparative distance from the sea, is insignificant in a voyage across the Atlantic, since the introduction of steam in the navigation of the ocean. What boots it, with such an agent, whether the distance to the empire of Neptune be *ten leagues* or *thirty*? *Five hours* make all the difference, a space of time too trifling for computation, and more than neutralized by the greater facilities afforded in the situation of this port.

The bar in the Delaware River, near Fort Mifflin, which was caused by the works constructed at the Revolution, for the common benefit, will no doubt be removed at the common expense. At present it forms little impediment to ships of the largest tonnage, and admits the passage of vessels, with perhaps less obstruction than the more extended bar which is encountered on the line of the Gedney Channel, off Sandy Hook. A small portion of the labour and expense employed in dredging the channel, between the Battery at New York and the sea, would render the Delaware River, quite equal if not superior to it, in volume and depth of water. This work will no doubt be assumed by the Federal Government, when the authoritative voice

of "consolidated Philadelphia," shall be raised in its behalf, especially when the receipts at her Custom House shall impressively second so reasonable a request.

Within twenty years, the Custom House of Philadelphia has paid into the treasury of the United States, about fifty-five millions of dollars, and if we add the importations made through another city, her merchants have contributed to the same treasury, within the same period, above two hundred millions more. The few smiles of favour which have beamed upon our harbour from Washington, may not be owing to a spirit of unkindness towards this locality. It would do no violence to logic, if our merchants, in petitioning for local aid, were to be answered, that as they patronised the port of New York, in preference to their own, Congress considered each munificent appropriation to that harbour, as a special favour conferred upon Philadelphia! But this city having ceased to contemplate so fondly the concerns of that metropolis, has opened its eyes to the capabilities of its own port, and turned them to the commanding necessity of *direct importations*, and of a *commercial marine*, suited to the exigencies of an independent system of commerce.

As Philadelphia possesses in a noble harbour and a capacious channel, all that commerce can desire, so, in geographical position, she commands a decided superiority over all her sisters. I have already shown how much of the western and southern trade she must exclusively appropriate, and her large participation in the rich trade of the great Northern Lakes. Let us now open the map of the country, in order to define more distinctly the shares which nature designs to apportion among the great cities of the Atlantic. New York may rightfully claim her own territory, the eastern part of New Jersey, and a division with Boston of the New England States, together

with that portion of the northwestern trade which she secures, through the medium of the Lakes. She is shut out from the whole inland trade of the South, and having no connexion with the western waters, cannot expect, from her remoteness, to enjoy any considerable part of the western trade. *Pennsylvania is the interposing line* between the Northern States, which naturally belong to New York and Boston, and the whole Western and Southern States, whose extended and opulent trade, in its transit to the Atlantic, must necessarily flow either to Philadelphia or to Baltimore. If a line were drawn, dividing the confederacy by the map, we should not give a tenth of the area, nor a fourth of the population, to New York and Boston. But as they will participate in the trade of the Lakes, and have a coast-wise communication with some of the Southern States, bordering on the sea, they may perhaps command nearly a fourth of the trade of the older States. The vast residue will be divided between Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New Orleans, and in the quantities proportioned to their relative importance. From the constant flow of the popular tide to the West, this immense disproportion will augment with each succeeding year.

But New York, touching only the Atlantic and the Lakes, and the position of Pennsylvania placing her in contact with these and the western rivers,—advantages united by no other State of the Union—she has resources of trade which mark her for pre-eminence. Her central locality and extended connexions by land and water, enable her to put under contribution every accessible region of the United States. No part, indeed, of that grand tract of country which, bounded by the Atlantic, stretches from the Bay of Fundy, along the great chain of Lakes to the Pacific Ocean, and, with an imperial amplitude, sweeps around to the Gulf of Mexico, but may, to some

extent, be rendered tributary to the trade which will concentrate in the thoroughfares of Philadelphia.

In natural and artificial wealth, the two States of Pennsylvania and New York are unequal. I do not alone refer to many of the productions of agriculture, in which Pennsylvania has been shown to be before her; nor to manufactures, in which she is very far in advance; nor to minerals, in which she carries the palm without a contest;—but to the aggregate value of these and others, in which the inequality is too striking for comparison. The whole value of the real and personal estate in Pennsylvania, I have shown, was computed, upon the Census Returns of 1840, at *twenty-one hundred millions of dollars*. According to Burk's Atlas of the State of New York, a work of labour and authority, the entire property of that Commonwealth in 1839, was estimated at \$662,000,000—a sum less than one-third the value of the property of Pennsylvania.—For reasons which cannot be plausibly contested, I have assigned to Philadelphia a population, at least as numerous as that of her great sister.—The coastwise trade of Philadelphia transcends that of her neighbour in the number of vessels employed, and in their aggregate tonnage. This commerce increased, in half a century, more than six-fold, according to the able Report of Major Hartman Bache, made a few years ago, to the Secretary of War. His table commences at the year 1787, and terminates with that of 1837. The number of coastwise arrivals, in the former year, at the port of Philadelphia, was 390 vessels; in the latter they amounted to 3,995; and adding arrivals not before included, at ports out of the district, the whole number was 7,775 vessels. From the ratio of increase observable in the coal trade before the date of 1837, Major Bache was of opinion, that within the period of twenty years, 17,000 vessels



would be required for the exigencies of that business. Fourteen years have now elapsed, and from the number engaged in the trade and its marvellous increase, we may witness, before the expiration of the time, the literal fulfilment of the prediction. The total coasting trade of Philadelphia not only greatly exceeds in magnitude, that of the port of New York, but as I have before observed, *our coal trade alone* is greatly beyond *the whole foreign tonnage* of that port. No estimate can be formed of the magnitude of the coasting trade of Philadelphia, from the *permanent enrolled tonnage*, which, however, as it represents 1400 different vessels, bearing 127,892½ tons, is by no means insignificant. The whole number of coasters which arrived at this port in the year 1850, according to the table which I have already given you, is no less than 27,035, of which, 16,726 sustained a tonnage of 1,884,110 tons. If we add to the number reported in the table, the arrivals at Bristol by the Delaware division of the Pennsylvania canal, the totality of these arrivals will make the large number of 35,320 vessels.

The inland trade of New York is greater at present than Philadelphia, from the joint effects of a canal and two railways, all leading to and connected with the Lakes. But the contiguity of Pennsylvania to the Western States, and the various lines of railway, now on the verge of completion, will place the two cities on an equality in regard to the interior, and soon determine the effect of their respective exertions. When those connexions shall be formed, which a few months will complete, the great valley of the Ohio losing itself in that of the Mississippi, will unite with the Southern country on the one hand, and Lake Erie on the other, to increase, beyond example, the volume of our inland trade. The consummation of the mountain region of the great work to Pittsburg, with a

divergence from Sunbury to Erie, will be the era when Philadelphia will commence her precedence of New York in the commerce of the Lakes, which is now ascertained to amount to 200 *millions of dollars per annum*. The Lake trade is therefore not only equal in value to the whole foreign commerce of the country, but destined to immense and indefinite enlargement. In the present year, when the Pennsylvania Railroad has only partially penetrated to Pittsburg, being unfinished for nearly forty miles from that terminus, the trade of Philadelphia has been most sensibly improved and augmented. In a recent case of equity jurisdiction, in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, the fact was established by many concurring witnesses, that the inland trade had been advanced by the railroad, within the last year, "from 25 to 50 per cent." The opinions of our most observant and intelligent merchants, are recorded, who unite in testifying to this augmentation, with great directness and cogency.

The remaining point of comparison, is the foreign commerce of the two cities, of which New York enjoys the greater share. But this inequality does not arise from defects in the naval channel of Philadelphia or incapacity in the harbour; nor for want of capital to sustain an adequate shipping; nor because the demands of her business are unequal to a larger commerce; but because of the voluntary relinquishment of it to her neighbour, by the formation of temporary or casual ties with that metropolis. The fact that the foreign commerce of New York is greater than that of Philadelphia, does not prove that the latter disposes of less foreign merchandise, or that her domestic business is less. The only difference is, that the *carrying trade* of Philadelphia has been abandoned to New York, from causes already traced, and under circumstances before adverted to. The development of the grand mineral

treasures of the State, disengaged the affections of our citizens from former objects of attachment, and substituted other tastes and preferences for those of commerce. There is a mental habitude of great tenacity, induced by the long and extensive ownership of real estate, the immobility of whose nature seems better to accord with the tone of its holders, than that more fluctuating and fickle element which is the medium of commerce. This affection may become a delusion, and is sometimes as fatal in its results on private fortunes, as the other extreme of buying sunbeams or speculating in another planet. In Pennsylvania it has had the effect of lessening the wealth of its possessors, and the value of landed property in the State, as well as contributing its influence to the transfer of Philadelphia commerce to a neighbouring port. In imparting what is called *stability* to fortunes, it stops the currency of capital, and relaxes all the energies of business life. It chills the warm spirit of enterprise, and deadens those aspirations which act as motives to public progress, and spurs to private success.

The amount of foreign merchandise, which is here consumed or distributed, has been estimated, and the direct importations shown. The facts in regard to both are the more humiliating, because they are the gradual result of circumstances which imperceptibly grew up around us, and unchecked, are permitted to continue. The policy, if adopted from choice, remains, and is endured, only from passive submission, without the plea of public, or the excuse of private necessity. No one is to blame for an evil which he did not foresee, and could not prevent; but all may be censured who tolerate by supineness what they loudly deplore, and allow to be perpetuated by sloth or timidity, that which they could speedily terminate by the exercise of vigour and resolution. If the shipping be in-

sufficient to supply, by direct importations, all the wants of the market, the present is an opportune period, from the quantities of foreign goods with which the country is flooded, to diminish the amount, until the mercantile marine be equal to the increased emergency. To continue importations through New York, will wither and blast, for Philadelphia, the fairest prospects which ever beamed upon a maritime port! The merchants of 1851 have only to echo the sentiment of one of the *Non-Importation Resolutions* of 1765, as steadfastly as they were uttered and observed by their fathers—" *The Merchants and Traders of the City of Philadelphia do unanimously agree!*"—and the work is done. If they would cherish and diffuse a feeling of honest pride in their fair metropolis; if they would not obstruct its destiny by omitting to perform their duty; if they would kindle anew the hopes of benevolence, of science, of genius, in this locality; if they would recall the discredit which is associated with wilful inferiority and helpless dependence;—they would "UNANIMOUSLY AGREE" to throw off their commercial *shackles*, as intolerable to freemen, everywhere, and totally repugnant to the *genius loci*, to the history and ancient spirit of Philadelphia. Nature and art have combined in furnishing vast materials and numerous conveniences, for the commerce of Philadelphia. So little remains to be done, and the promises of that little are so attractive and transcendent, that as its importance cannot be overrated, I cannot believe that it will be overlooked or disparaged.

In addition to the temporary curtailment of imports, the desired independence will be aided by the establishment of a line of steamers which shall come into competition for speed of transit, as well as for construction and capacity, with those of New York and Boston. We have already two noble ships belonging to a line of steam pro-



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pellers, which are to consist of four, and to sail as regular packets between this port and Liverpool. The freights and passengers thus far, have justified the high expectations which their advent excited. As the foreign tonnage of the port is not equal to her future wants, it is important that *steam*, rather than sailing vessels should be multiplied, as best adapted to her position. Sailing vessels must ever be in demand for the shipment of heavy and bulky commodities, and for the conveyance of steerage passengers. For these and for ships propelled by the machinery of the screw, an immense immigrant business may be expected. But a line of steamers should be built, combining the requisite safety, with a swiftness which shall maintain an equality with the fleetest vessels of Collins or Cunard. An object so desirable, can be easily effected by a concert of British capital with Philadelphia mechanics.

I have, it is hoped, presented my topics in so many aspects as to render recapitulation needless, in recommending our port as a point of steam connexion, to your friends in Europe. If England be indifferent, French capitalists will doubtless embark in an enterprise, which for the carriage of passengers, is more eligible than New York or Boston. Our lines of railway will bring from the extremities of the South and West, multitudes of men of wealth, leisure and the true itinerant spirit, who have only wanted an easy access to the Atlantic, to indulge their thirst for foreign travel. But obvious reasons exist why a great and populous City, perhaps the largest in the new world, whose site and importance make it the great granary of so many different States, should attract passengers as well as trade. Persons who visit our shores to make the country their permanent home, and seeking a retreat in the wild but prolific West, will soon learn that the port of Philadelphia, connected by an unbroken chain

of railways with the transmontane regions and the Ohio River, presents, of all others, the shortest and cheapest route to the land of promise. The merchants of Philadelphia will warmly concur in the enterprise, as one of the great means of emancipating their commerce from the thralldom of New York, and of making their city known, as it ought to be, to the European world.

I have now given you all that I had to say, and more than I intended, at the outset, of the resources of the State, and the capabilities of the City. Your official character and long residence among us, the tie which binds you to this country, and the affections which centre in your native soil, all point you out as a proper medium of communication with the British and American public, on the subject of Philadelphia commerce. If my own fellow-citizens can be awakened to an earnest sense of duty, and excited to an adequate or corresponding activity, I shall be satisfied. Our British friends should be reminded of a spot, on this side of the Atlantic, which was well known to their fathers, and is now fulfilling in the varied productions and the elegant genius of its people, all the predictions of a former age.

British commerce penetrates into every region, and British capital is seeking investment, in every part of the globe. England may examine the world with a telescope;—she may look around her or at a distance, whether among her own possessions, or into countries which do not acknowledge her supremacy, and she will find no people so homogeneous with the English as our own, and none whose commerce confers greater advantages or larger returns. She will find no such sympathy of tastes, or similarity of character and institutions, either among her dependencies in the East, or among her Colonies in the West Indies, either among her neighbours

across the Channel, or among their descendants of Canada across the Atlantic. As kindred, we drink at the literary, legal, and political fountains of our common progenitors. Nothing is so favourable to the perpetuity of these memories, as the intermingling relations of an intimate commerce. It calls into dominion that better instinct of our nature, which, not bounded, in its sullen charities, by narrow limits or political creeds, radiates like the beams of the sun, and universal as its light, and warm and diffusive as its heat, encircles all lands, and embraces both hemispheres.

I remain, dear Sir, yours, faithfully.

FINIS.

